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GERALDINE'S SECRET.

They Both Had "Wheels"---A Story of Man's Jealousy and Woman's Fear---A Mystery Made Clear.

By EDNA JONE TYLER.
(Complete in This Issue.)

The pretty ormolu clock in the dining room rang out in silvery chimes, the hour of seven.

Within a cosy little apartment, breakfast was in progress; and seated at the table were Roland Carleton, his lovely little wife Geraldine, and her maiden aunt, Marcia Powell. A lively argument was being carried on between the ladies, the husband taking no part in the conversation—apparently absorbed in a newspaper; but that he was not wholly oblivious of the subject under discussion was evident; for, as he laid down the paper and arose from the table he remarked:

"Well, Auntie, there is a little article on the second page of the Journal apropos of your side of the argument. I'd stop and read it to you, but that I have an important engagement this morning, so I must be going."

Kissing his wife affectionately, he took up his hat and left the house.

"What a dear, good husband Roland is," said Aunt Marcia, "and how happy your two years of wedded life have been; not a cloud to mar your happiness, and—"

The sentence ended abruptly as her glance fell upon the Journal, which Mr. Carleton had been reading.

"I guess I'll see what is in the article Roland referred to."

Aunt Marcia opened the paper and looked over its columns. She soon found the article and read it aloud.

"A Narrow Escape from Death. The Carelessness of a Bicycle Rider:

"Late yesterday afternoon a young lady narrowly escaped death while riding a bicycle. She was apparently inexperienced, and was so intent upon the management of the wheel that she failed to notice the approach of another cyclist who was coasting Maple Hill, going at a very rapid rate. The wheels collided and the riders were thrown. The young lady, though badly frightened, was unhurt, beyond a few slight bruises; the coaster, however, did not fare so well, his left leg being broken and his right ankle sprained. Both bicycles were entirely wrecked.

"The parties refused to give their names, but it is believed that the young lady is the wife of a prominent lawyer of this city.

"Maple Hill is one of the steepest and most abrupt declivities in the vicinity, which only the most intrepid cyclist dare to ride, and an attempt to coast it is exceedingly dangerous and exhibits a most reckless disregard of life to climb.

"This is the third accident through careless and reckless cycling which has occurred in the city within the week."

Aunt Marcia folded the paper and laid it beside her plate.

"Yes, Geraldine, it is just as I was saying. The bicycle riders are getting so careless that it will be but a short time before the hospitals are full of patients with broken heads," and she picked up the paper again and once more glanced at the close of the paragraph, "It is believed that the young lady is the wife of a prominent lawyer of this city."

"Why, Geraldine, who can that be? Who do we know that would answer that description? Why——"

"How can I guess, Auntie?" she interrupted, with a little laugh. "There are half a dozen young lawyers of the Jefferson County bar who have wives."

"Yes, I know that," said Aunt Marcia, a little stiffly, irritated at the interruption. "But I mean what young lawyer do we know who has got a bicycle wife?"

"There may be several of them," replied Geraldine. "Arthur Stanton's wife rides, and——"

"Couldn't very well call her a 'young lady,'" returned Aunt Marcia, with a curl of her aristocratic lip, "she's nearly as old as I am! And, by the way, what an idea! A woman of her age getting out on a wheel and making a guy of herself. Why, it's perfectly ridiculous! I saw her this morning, while we were out in the garden before breakfast, whirling along, sitting there large as life on that bicycle, not one whit abashed nor appearing conscious in the least that in those bloomers she was a spectacle for gods and men. I was ready to sink with shame for her! Thank heaven, none of my nieces would ever be guilty of such a freak of insanity—for it is insanity!"

"Why, Auntie——"

"No. Why Auntie about it! It's so! No woman in her same senses would so far forget her womanhood. It's demoralizing to society and immoral in its tendency!" and having thus delivered herself, Miss Powell sank back into her chair with a sigh of relief.

"But, Auntie, I don't see that it is so very bad. Irene says it's most healthful and a delightful exercise."

"Irene Cutler says! Of course she says so; she thinks anything healthful that is boydenish. Why, she goes to the gymnasium, so I have been told, and cuts up all sorts of antics, swinging her arms about like a maniac in a frenzy, performing like an ape on a trapeze, and doing all sorts of unfeminine tricks. That's the cause of my dislike for her. She's all right, otherwise, but that awful habit spoils all of her nice ways. I can't see why—I can't comprehend the reason that ladies of culture idolize her!"

"I think she looks very graceful on the wheel, Auntie, and even you must admit that her movements are the acme of grace—they are graceful itself. And her husband says it is all due to her gymnastic exercises," returned Geraldine, enthusiastically.

"Mr. Cutler is obliged to say something, of course, to excuse her; but I don't believe he approves of it. Just think, for a moment, of the annoyance that Roland would experience, if his wife were to indulge in such an unwomanly exercise! You know he abhors and has expressed his dislike of masculine women, and especially of women in bloomers, the so-called bicycle girls. Why, he says he can't bear them. It makes women rude and coarse—and they're all alike."

"Now, Aunt Marcia! That's decidedly too bad to make a sweeping assertion like that. I don't think it is necessary for a lady to lose her modesty and dignity because she rides a wheel!" exclaimed Geraldine, indignantly.

"Why, I thought you objected to unwomanly practices yourself, and I know that Roland does. It isn't a year ago that I heard him say that the worst abomination and innovation of the present age was the 'bicycle girl,'" replied Miss Powell, in a convincing tone. "He has the utmost contempt for one!"

"I know that he does not approve of ladies riding the wheel, but if he was satisfied that she had not lowered her dignity and had preserved her health by riding, perhaps he might not feel so strongly about it," said Geraldine.

"He never could love a mannish woman!" declared Aunt Marcia. "You have often heard him say so! Nor a bicycle woman!"

Mrs. Carleton's face took on a deeper flush; her eyes filled with tears, she rose and made some trivial excuse for leaving to her room.

"I wonder if Roland would feel that contempt for me or would cease to love me if he knew," she soliloquized. "It don't seem possible that his love can be so fleeting as that; but I know it is not; but if it were so, it is not worth having. Still, he is so kind and noble, it seems cruel and wicked to be deceiving him even in so innocent a matter. If Aunt Marcia were not so positive that he would not forgive me, I'd be almost tempted to tell him now; but Irene says that when he does know well I can ride and how well I look he will relent—and it is such glorious fun to ride the wheel," concluded Geraldine.

She looked at her watch.

"Mercy! It's time for my lesson, and Mr. Raymond will think I am not coming. He'll imagine I was serious when I said I'd go that last evening. I wonder if Aunt Marcia suspected anything? I felt my face flush, and I know I must have looked positively guilty when she read that item in the paper."

Hastily arraying herself in a bicycle costume, Geraldine covered it with a street skirt, put on her hat and jacket, and descended to the sitting room, where she found Aunt Marcia busily engaged in crochet-work.

"Going out?" she inquired.

"Yes, I think a little fresh air will do me good; it is quite close this morning in the house and, besides, I shall probably do some shopping while I am out. Is there any errand I can do for you, Auntie?"

"You might get me another skein of this orange silk; I shall need another, and this is almost gone. Be sure and match the exact shade," and Aunt Marcia snipped a short length of the silk.

Geraldine took the sample, drew on her gloves, and tripped lightly down the steps, where she was joined by her bicycle teacher, Kenneth Raymond, a tall, handsome gentleman of perhaps thirty years.

"Just to think of that stupid reporter giving out in his newspaper account of the accident that I was believed to be the wife of a prominent lawyer," she laughed. "It was really amusing, but at the same time I felt so nervous for fear Roland would suspect who was referred to. I feel a little tame yet from my fall," and chatting gayly with her companion, she walked on.

As they passed Lexington street an incisive "Good morning, Mrs. Carleton. Beautiful day, Mr. R." greeted them.

"I was only out on the avenue with Mr. Raymond practicing on my wheel."

Mrs. Barton's falsetto voice cut the hazy air like a knife, interrupting their animated conversation on the merits of different wheels and both Geraldine and Mr. Raymond stared involuntarily.

A fussy lady with a decidedly vinegary countenance masked beneath an insincere smile, was hastening after them with outstretched, chubby hand all glittering with rings.

"I'm so glad to have met you," she said, with a twinkling little laugh.

If the pleasure was mutual, Geraldine's expressive face belied the fact. She had never liked Mrs. Stanton.

Mr. Raymond doffed down from his six feet of altitude.

Mrs. Barton was decidedly dumpy—short, stout, unmistakably stout, quite overdressed as usual for a morning disguise, in a glistening silk, her thick ankles displayed beneath the rather short skirt.

"Did I startle you, my dear?" asked the vivacious lady, with another sharp, derisive laugh. "Heard I'm not in town. I'm sure! Why, how lovely you are looking, my dear Geraldine—how attractive your costume is, and your hat is just beautiful—yellow roses are so becoming to your brunette style—don't you think so, Mr. Raymond?"

"I don't know—that I presume so," stammered Kenneth Raymond.

"Lucky—very," with a little sidelong glance from a pair of shifty, gray eyes, "if Geraldine were not Mrs. Carleton, I should suppose I had interrupted a tete-a-tete. Well, I leave you here. Good afternoon, Mr. Raymond. Good-by, Geraldine. I shall hope to see you at Mrs. Stanton's reception this evening," and with a little wave of her baby hand she left them.

They proceeded to the bicycle rink, where the riding carnival was being held for the season, for an hour. Mrs. Carleton struggled with the vehemence of her indignation.

The lesson over, she made a few purchases and started to her return home.

The gentle, hazy summer morning had ended in a drizzling rain, and being without an umbrella, she took refuge in a street car.

"Charming gentleman your Mr. Raymond, Mrs. Carleton."

The speaker—Mrs. Barton, stood by the divan upon which sat Mr. and Mrs. Carleton, in the reception given at this time.

As she spoke she glanced at Geraldine, and then at Roland, with a meaning smile in that sidelong look which made Geraldine feel quite uncomfortable.

"And who is Mr. Raymond, pray?" inquired Roland.

"A gentleman friend of mine," replied Mrs. B., blandly, and as he looked up, Roland encountered another sidelong glance which she had bestowed upon his wife.

Geraldine colored to the roots of her hair and without fully comprehending why, became the picture of deepest guilt.

She did not reply.

"Oh, I understand, you don't care to discuss it, dear," remarked Mrs. B., in a confidential undertone, which was plainly to be audible to Roland, at the same time, and into a seat beside Mrs. Carleton. "Wouldn't have mentioned his name for the world had I known that I was touching upon a forbidden subject. I beg your pardon, my dear, I'm being so thoughtlessly indiscreet; I am so sorry."

Mrs. B. darkened Mr. Carleton's face and he bit his lip impatiently. Then his brow cleared and he smiled at his wife.

We would ask no questions concerning this gentleman, at this present time, Geraldine would volunteer an explanation when they reached home, of course.

So he reasoned; but, to his infinite surprise, his wife made no reference to the strangers of Mrs. B.'s introduction. The circumstance had gone from her mind entirely or she chose not to refer to it.

The more Roland thought over the matter the more it puzzled him. Who was this man? Why had Mrs. B. referred to him in so covert a manner? And, lastly, why had Geraldine appeared so conscious and blushed so strangely at the mention of his name?

He found no solution of his questions, and as his wife made no reference to the incident, it gradually passed from his mind as a matter of little moment.

A week later Mr. Carleton received a letter summoning him immediately out of the city on an important matter connected with his law business.

Hastily kissing his wife that he was to be away for two or three days he took the first train for Cincinnati.

Dropping into a seat he unfolded a paper and soon became absorbed in the news of the day, utterly unconscious of what was going on about him, until the name of Mrs. Carleton was spoken.

Two young men were chatting in the seat behind him, and the sentence almost struck him dumb with astonishment.

"As Mrs. Carleton withdrew herself from Raymond's arms, and stood by his side, blushing and so confused, she looked like a young queen," Gerald Wells had been saying in his place at that time. How I envied Raymond his beautiful name, too—dear!"

"How did you discover her name?"

"She was a schoolmate of mine when she was Miss Geraldine Powell."

"Raymond? Raymond? was the name of the gentleman whom Mrs. B. inquired. What does it mean?" "Who is this Raymond and what connection has he with Geraldine, my wife?"

With his brain on fire, Roland completed his business at Cincinnati, and hastened on his return trip a day sooner than he had expected.

He could wait no longer! He would seek an explanation, and she should deny with her own lips this slander.

"Geraldine is not at home."

Arrived at home, with beating heart and flushed face, Roland rang the bell for the servant.

In a moment old Aunt Margaret (Mrs. Carleton's nurse and humble confidante Carleton's nurse and humble confidante Carleton's nurse and humble confidante from childhood) appeared. She started back with a cry of dismay upon seeing her master.

"For de' Lor', Marse Rolan', what done brunged yo' home so soon? What's de matter?"

The look of impatience upon Mr. Carleton's face gave way to an expression of astonishment as at the frustrated, unwonted nuisance of the old negress.

"Why do you ask what is the matter, Margaret? What do you mean?"

"Sufferin' Moses, chile! I—I—I was kinder skeered—I mean comfumbustercated myself, cause I didn't 'spect you home so soon. Don't you' mind me 't all, Marse Roland. Of course, dere ain't nuffin' de matter."

The old servant glanced about nervously and shifted from one foot to the other in an uneasy manner.

Roland's face swelled almost to suffocation. Where was Geraldine and what was this mystery?

"Where is your mistress?" he asked, in a tone of suppressed excitement.

"Why, Marse Raymon', she—she's—she's tastin' and scummering. Don't go and see if she is, Marse Rolan'."

"Never mind! I'll go myself," interrupted Roland.

"I done t'ink she's gone out," whispered Margaret, considerably abashed by his manner at stern look.

Mr. Carleton hastily left the room, springing up the stairs at a time.

He entered his wife's room and called: "Geraldine!"

She was not there.

He turned down stairs and again confronting Margaret, he demanded to know where his wife had gone.

"Why, Marse Rolan'—"

"Where is your mistress?" The question came in a commanding tone of anger, which left no doubt in the servant's mind but that Roland was aware truthfully. No evasion would avail.

"I reckon she gone out with Marse Raymon', ter—ter—"

"With whom?" he almost shouted.

"With Marse Raymon, her—I can't tell yer, Massa. I promised Missis I wouldn't. She 'lowed she'd tell you herself," and the old servant withdrew, much frightened at the effect of her words.

Reaching the kitchen, she whispered to John, her fellow-servant, that "Marse Rolan' had done come, an' he's starin' mad, or some sich stuff! He done acted like a wild man."

As soon as the old negress had withdrawn, Mr. Carleton sat quite still. His eyes sternly upon Geraldine's face and in a bitter tone exclaimed:

"Since you have left it quite time that I have an explanation of your most extraordinary conduct—"

"Roland, have you gone daft? What do you mean?"

"Gone daft? No, would to God I had before my eyes this day! Geraldine, you—you—you will become false to me!"

"But, husband, I don't understand you!" Geraldine, pale, rose and confronted her husband, sternly. "I think we had better come to a thorough understanding, Roland, and at once. I am about to ask you a few questions, which will be met with neither answer nor without prevarication or evasion. In all my wildest imaginings, I have never dreamed that you, the wife I honored above all women would bring disgrace upon my name."

"Disgrace!" faltered Geraldine.

"Aye, disgrace!" he replied. "Do you think that I will submit tamely to hear my wife's name bandied from lip to lip in connection with that of a prostitution of prodigates? I ask you once for all—what is this man, Raymond, to you? Who was he, what?"

He was speaking in the low, concentrated tone of jealous wrath. He was white to the lips with anger. The fiend, jealousy, had entered his morbid jealousy, had gained possession of him—the serpent which had, until then, lain dormant in his heart, now stirring.

Geraldine slightly frightened by his tone and manner—then her natural pride asserted itself and flushed crimson, then retired full in the face, as she returned proudly:

"Kenneth Raymond is my friend, and being so, what then?"

Roland's dark eyes were agitter with anger and wounded pride.

Her husband's lip curled with disdain.

"Friend, a friend, is it one of Mr. Raymond's prerogatives to hold my wife in his embrace? Is it friendly, faithful, but now striving to cover your perfidy with a contemptible subterfuge? Geraldine, you only false, but adding to that sin another, that of lying!"

The passionate and indignation knew no bounds.

"Husband Carleton!" Her voice rang out clear and strong. "How dare you insult me with such a word as perfidy!"

"Perhaps your friend, Mr. Kenneth Raymond, would like a more appropriate term," said, sarcastically.

"He will certainly be would," returned Geraldine with spirit, "Mr. Kenneth Raymond is a gentleman."

"And you think he has all the virtues of a modern Bayard, and all the graces of a Chesterfield," said Roland, with a sneer, "in a positive fury. "That's probably the reason you are so attentive to my wife."

"Roland Carleton, perhaps you will explain yourself? I am at a loss to understand the conversation which you make!"

"No explanation is necessary! Your own guilty conscience can furnish all the required explanation."

"Are you mad?"

The young wife raised her head proudly and defiantly.

"Do you deny the charge?" he demanded, wrathfully.

"I certainly do!"

"Answer me, truthfully! I demand the truth! Have you ever, even for a single moment, allowed Raymond's arms to enfold you?" Yes or no!"

She comprehends it all in a flash. Her own peril, the coaster on Maple Hill, the collision of wheels, and the moment when, but for the outstretched arms of Kenneth Raymond, her bicycle teacher, she would have been dashed to the ground. Several had witnessed the accident, but who could have regarded the story to her husband?

"Yes or no! Do you deny your guilt?" he asked, in a harsh, cold voice.

"I deny any intention of falseness or guilt," she exclaimed indignantly, "but even if, through any contingency, I had been caught in his embrace, I—I—"

"If you could for an instant, for any reason whatsoever, allow the embrace of any man—from that moment you would cease to be my wife! Again I ask you, is this thing true?"

"It is true, you; but I can explain all. Roland, I meant no wrong; perhaps I have been very foolish to conceal from you my weakness, my fancy, for—"

"Enough! No sentiment, can warrant such light conduct on the part of my wife. I cannot believe you. From this moment, I no longer your husband!"

Geraldine faced him, her head thrown back, her eyes flashing with resentment, her face white with outraged pride.

"Very well, husband, as you please," she exclaimed, haughtily.

"Geraldine! If you have any explanation to make—"

"I have no explanation to make to a man who has insulted me. Let me pass!"

With head erect and haughty mien, Mrs. Carleton swept from the room, and proceeded to her own chamber.

"I will not forgive you! Never!" she exclaimed, her cheeks flushed and eyes sparkling with indignation. "How dare he insult me so!"

As she reflected upon the unjust and insulting words which her husband uttered, her bosom heaved with emotion and the tears which burned behind her eyes once more flowed and rolled slowly down her cheeks. Hours spent in bitter weeping followed and gone. He had kept his word. He had left her.

With a passionate cry of "Oh, Roland, my husband!" Geraldine threw herself upon the bed in the agony of sorrow.

For hours she remained there, weeping, her whole frame shaken by the fearful, troubled sleep.

When she awoke it was late in the night and her husband not yet returned.

Rising and bathing her face, she walked to the window and looked out until the early morning hours. At last, she sank into an armchair, and fell asleep, her tear stained eyelids dropped and she was fast asleep.

"For de' Lor', Marse Rolan', how you 'stonish me! Reckon done acted in dis yer way for! Dere's dat pore little lamb he's cryin' her breast eyes out, an' you sets afared out! I wonder what's 'come o' him. Here he's gone an' left de pore baby! Ain't no use, as writ-a singly word to dat breezed-critter—'Dear Geraldine, I'm ridin' dat bicycle—ole bicycle—what's 'dat? Spose she did git pitched inter Lincoln Park? Why, Marse Geraldine's gwine ter be pitched clar ter de' ocean! Dear Geraldine, I'm gwine ter—ter—ter—ter! 'Fore de Lor'! Dis ole darky's gwine ter git a pen an' ink, an' ole mess folks, anyhow. From de time dey comes inter de worl' 'twixt dey git out, dey is all de nuisance an' trouble. I wonder what's become ob Marse Rolan'? What for he 'spicion dat? Dat's what I wants ter know! I cut case Missy Geraldine done gone out in de rain, an' got pitched inter Lincoln Park, bicycle will Marse Raymon'? I wasn't a-goin' ter 'sturb 'em, dat's sho'! He might a knowed she wa'n't a dodo' ruffin' she hadn't outgrow'd. Geraldine, Geraldine, I'm afeard you' heared tell on, and Marse Rolan' ought ter be ashamed ob hisself—"

Thus the old negress, after a short while, she finished her work in the parlor and returned the room.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine and ten o'clock.

"Eight o'clock! Gracious! I must hurry up! It's mos' time for Missy Geraldine ter git down, an' I must change up her broom and dust-pan, Margaret hurried to the kitchen.

"Ting-a-ling-ling-ling!"

"Dar's de bell! Dat's de bell ag'in! Whar's de ole Harry's dat dar a-comin' here at dis yer time ob day? It hain't Missy Geraldine, 'cause she's done been here mo'n an hour ago. An' it's too airly for de gents, an' it's too late for de milk cards dis yer time ob day. Ough, oh, oh! I reckon it's de 'sturbance ob de 'fairs ob dis yer house, dat's a-comin' nigher."

"Ole Kingdom hain't so spry as yer was once! Yer a-gittin' ole and de rheumatis am a-sittin' in de yer ole bones," as Margaret, with a frightened face, opened the door.

A tall, stately lady stood on the steps, her face concealed in the veil which she was lifting as—

"Good morning, Margaret. Is your mistress—" she inquired.

The maid's eyes brightened at sight of the visitor, and with the freedom of an old privileged servant, she exclaimed:

"Missy Geraldine ain't dar, an' it yer lady self? Dat powerful glad ter see yer."

In truth, it brought her face to face as she ushered the lady into the sitting room.

"Missy Geraldine hain't come back yet," said the old servant, "I'll see if she's done waked up," adding, as she left the room, "she must be's, 'cause she hain't been left—for a few days."

In a few moments she returned, bearing the message, "Missy Geraldine gwine ter see yer up stairs." Then in her delight, she began to talk back the yer time o' de mornin'," as Mrs. Carlter made her way up the stairs to her mistress' room, "Marse Rolan'

tention—a savage mastiff dashed out from among the bushes, dragging a broken chain behind him, and, with a deep growl, sprang upon me.

"Oh, how dreadful!" exclaimed Geraldine with a shudder.

"I fought the brute until my strength began to leave me, then I made an outcry for help. I lost my footing, falling heavily to the ground. My last distinct idea was of the wheel of a cycle whirling and a shout of 'Help is here!' blending with the sound of a revolver shot, all, it seemed, in the same instant.

"Then I knew no more, until I awoke to find myself in bed in the chamber of—guess who?"

"How can I guess?"

"Kenneth Raymond—no one else. Of course, I had no idea who my preserver was, but it seems that he knew me by sight. With a peculiar smile he presented his card. At sight of it my blood boiled, all my mad jealousy returned. I am ashamed to say my manhood was quite forgotten. My rage burst forth in a torrent of reproaches—I berated him as a coward, a fraud, and—well, everything."

"Why, Roland! How could you!"

"To be sure, how could I? But I did. You must recollect that I was still in the dark as to the nature of his acquaintance with my wife," answered Roland. "And how could I suppose, after the seemingly strange behavior of Margaret when I returned from Scotland? Stammering and all confused when I inquired for you, she said you had come gone out with Marse Raymon' and that she had promised Missy she wouldn't tell—what was I to think?"

"It did look a little suspicious," smiled Mrs. Geraldine, "but I was quite sure the avenue back of the house with Mr. Raymond meaning my wheel, and—"

"Yes, I know," interrupting her with a fond kiss. "Mr. Raymond made it perfectly clear to me that I had made a most egregious donkey of myself. To make a long story short, I was just sampling for a cup of coffee, I charged him with having made love to you, and—well, you should have seen him. Throwing back his handsome head, he laughed in a way that was actually cane. It took but the shortest possible time for him to explain the whole situation, and it ever a man lived who was humbled, it was the man. To think that I could ever have doubted my dear little Blossom who loved me with her whole, innocent heart," and his eyes glistened as the recollection of Geraldine pressed a kiss tenderly upon his brow.

"Would my love ever forgive and forget? I asked myself again and again. I had full reason to be forgiven, I knew; but 'Hope springs eternal in the human breast,' and I decided to come back and be forgiven, pet?"

"All forgiven long ago. True, love never knows what is it to refuse pardon whenever sought by the beloved one."

"So after a few explanations I have brought you a little gift—an Empress bicycle. I have also purchased one for myself, and as confession is the order of the day, I will tell my secret: I have already taken lessons in the art."

"And you never told me?" smiled Geraldine.

"No. I was quite a coward and feared Aunt Hetty's sharp tongue; but together we shall be quite able to brave the torrent of her righteous indignation, and so, my darling, both wheels will be sent down presently from Wheeler & Co.'s establishment; and it is high time that we have breakfast and prepare for a ride. If any venturesome canaller dares impede our progress, let him beware; and if you are so unfortunate as to collide with a wheelman, my arms will be outstretched to receive you. I think Raymond was quite correct when he declared that we both have 'wheels.'"

Look out for Don Jenardo's great novel, "The Pirate's Daughter." It will begin in next week's LEDGER.

TO MY OLD CHUM.

By Edwin Harriman.

Dearest love of younger days,
I'm thinking now of you
And how I sang to you my lays
Beneath the apple trees.
That stood way down within the glen—
No! Others are there now,
And how you never spoke, but then
How oft' would I endure.

You stronger always were than I,
But I was true,
And when away I'd only sigh
And wait for you there.
But those sweet days have gone before
To reign in memory,
Yet still I love thee as of yore—
You dear old corn-cob pipe.

ROMANCE OF WORKHOUSE.

BY MRS. ISABEL SMITH.

The guardians of Mutby workhouse had just concluded their ordinary meeting, when the master, with rather a sheepish expression of countenance, observed:

"I think, gentlemen, I ought to lay before you a letter I received yesterday. First one of these days we had—

"Dear me, Tripp, what's that?" exclaimed the chaplain, otherwise the rector of Mutby, commonly called Parson Weaver, a round, rosy-faced man, who more resembled a farmer than a clergyman.

The other members of the board ceased their various occupations and looked expectant, all except Dr. Evesham, the medical officer.

For the last half hour he had heard every impatient thud of his handsome chestnut's hoofs on the gravel path, and felt that for what might be an agreeable method of passing a little spare time to his confreres was a waste of precious moments to a busy man like himself. The whole business might be settled so much more quickly had they been concise instead of rambling and disputative.

He had just been wondering how it could ever have been accepted as a popular fact that his sex were behindhand in the matter of speech when this new delay occurred.

He was a man of about 35, quiet and reserved, living by himself, and accustomed to long, lonely drives about the Suffolk country on his professional errands.

"Well, Tripp, what is it?" repeated Parson Weaver, rather impatiently. He had been interrupted in an interesting discussion with his neighbor, the squire, about the trotting hackney, and "gate post" magnolds that he had got from Ireland at the recent agricultural show.

Tripp cleared the big throat and read, somewhat nervously, the following epistle:

"Sir,—I, To the Master of the Mutby Workhouse: Sir—I am a native of Thorpe St. Barnabas, and left this country forty years ago for Australia, where I made a comfortable fortune. I am now returned to my native land, but find nearly all my friends are gone and scattered. I am 58 years old, strong and healthy, and want a wife to help spend my savings. Can you recommend me a nice, respectable young woman among your inmates? She should prefer a single woman, not a widow, and would make quite a good husband. Please write by return to Stephen Taxley, Bell Inn, Thorpe St. Barnabas."

A smile appeared on most of the faces round the table—except the table as the master finished.

"Dear me, Tripp," said the parson, "are you to be turned into a matrimonial agency in your old age?"

"It seems so, sir. Curious letter, isn't it, gentlemen? But I thought it my duty to read it."

"Certainly, certainly," echoed all. Dr. Evesham's face was covered with one of the big windows at a distant view of the wherry sails gliding up the river.

"What is the applicant's character?" asked the squire rather pettishly. He thought the chairman encouraged this sort of interest in the subject, so that he could get home early. He was a keen breeder of cows of agriculture, and convince Parson Weaver that the prize for mangolds had been unfairly bestowed.

"My opinion? I have hardly had time to form one," replied Tripp, with a deprecating air. "But I don't know that I should take any notice of the letter."

The master couched deprecatingly. "Well, sir, if I may, I think it right as to suggest. I just mentioned the matter to my wife, and thought she thinks he might do for Susannah West."

"Susannah West!" exclaimed the doctor, bringing his chair down on the floor violently as to make the others start.

"Is that the case you mentioned, Tripp?" asked the squire, screwing up his eyes meditatively.

"And violet eyes?" said the parson; "very much like some of the old masters' portraits of the Madonna."

"The young woman's father was a small farmer at Thorpe St. Barnabas," said the master, "and failed. She was ill for a time while there, and got here. It seemed to prey upon her mind—"

"Yes, yes, we all remember," said the medical officer, who had flushed scarlet; it was a tough job to pull her through."

"You object, Evesham?" said Sir," said the butcher, cheerfully. He did not object to what some members called extravagance in the sick dietaries, and had actually included a good supply of beef tea.

"A sad case," said the parson, sighing. "But don't see why the young woman can't go out to service."

"Not strong enough," replied the doctor, "nor brought up to any sort of work. She has the instincts of a lady, but unfortunately not enough of education to fit her for teaching."

"Then, for what I can see of it," said the squire, "she is better off for the rest of her days—like old Molly Mobbs, that was reckoned the finest sort the ratepayers ever 8,000 altogether."

"Unless she accepts this offer," said the chaplain. "Eh, gentlemen?"

At that moment a troop of little workhouse children filed past the window, followed by a young woman, clad in lilac-check linsey gown and black straw union bonnet with its purple ribbon.

"There goes Susannah West," exclaimed the master; "she's just bringing the little ones home from a walk. A rare hand she is with them, too."

The sun was shining straight upon the young woman in question, and the doctor caught a glimpse of a dazzling wild-rose complexion and bands of red-gold waving hair.

"A very respectable girl, indeed," said the parson, "and I think we ought to follow this offer up. We ought to make inquiries; but I suppose there's nothing else in the parish" (the others exchanged quietly amused glances at this assertion, for it was well known that the parson was a most paroochial duties very lightly), "I will go over to Thorpe St. Barnabas myself, and find out all I can of Mr. Stephen Taxley. But is the applicant willing to marry him, Tripp?"

A special board meeting was held a few days later. The parson's inquiries proved satisfactory, and it only remained to inform the young girl of the proposal.

"I suppose you've quite settled it shall be Susannah West, gentlemen?" said the master, a little diffidently.

"I suppose so, Tripp. Why?" asked the squire.

"Well, sir, for the matter of getting rid of one of the women, I'd rather it was Mary Pott. She's such a grumbling creature—never pleased."

"So she is, Tripp; but then she's a widow, and that's one of Taxley's specifications."

Tripp scratched his head. "Not a bad-looking woman, sir," he observed.

"No, no. But a stipulation is a stipulation; and I, for my part, agree that Providence has sent this special offer on purpose for Susannah."

"Yes, gentlemen; that is all very well as far as it goes," said the medical officer, who had not yet spoken.

"But the question still remains, Will Susannah West have him?"

The others looked a little foolish, as though the side of the argument had not struck them.

"That we can soon find out," said Parson Weaver, irritably. "Tripp, fetch the girl here."

In a few minutes the girl stood before them; she looked shy and half frightened, wondering what the board could want of her.

"Ha, Susannah, my dear," began the parson—he had called her Miss West in the days of her prosperity, but one cannot expect complimentary titles in the workhouse—"we have sent for you—because—in short we have a—a—a very advantageous offer, which we think will just suit you."

Before Susannah could make any reply, the squire, determined that the chaplain should not have it all his own way, exclaimed in his hearty voice: "What would you say to a good home and a kind husband, my girl?"

The color flooded Susannah's face; she gave one startled glance, then stood, with her eyes on the floor, nervously plaiting a corner of her checked apron.

"Perhaps it would be as well if I read the letter we have received," said the parson, glaring disapproval at his neighbor for having forced his hand.

Then he put on his spectacles and read in slow and ponderous tones Mr. Stephen Taxley's epistle, pausing every now and then to see the effect.

If he expected rapturous gratitude when he finished, he was disappointed. Susannah never raised her eyes. Her color came and went, and her lips trembled; but she said not a word.

"Well, my girl," cried the squire, unable to restrain his impatience, "what do you say to this? Isn't it a fine chance? I wouldn't think twice about it if I were you. Just look at your position. Here you are in the work-house at your age, and, like a rat, without a friend in the world. Not any kind of home prospect," he added, as a pained expression flitted across the girl's face.

"Perhaps she would like a little time to think it over," suggested the butcher, in his thick, husky voice.

"Have you got nothing to say, Susannah?" inquired the parson rather sternly.

The girl's fingers interlaced nervously. "You are very kind, gentlemen; but I—I—don't know what to say—"

She looked round appealingly, desperately.

"Come, come, be quick to settle it, girl. We didn't want another special meeting called," cried the squire.

The medical officer rose. "I think, gentlemen, perhaps if I saw Miss West, she would know she might give me an answer. She feels embarrassed, I can see."

"Quite right, Evesham," said the parson. "Tripp, take Miss Susannah into your room, then."

Tripp, jumping up with alacrity, led the way to his tobacco-scented little sanctum.

"Sit down, Susannah," said the doctor, kindly. "Now, don't be hurried. You have heard this offer; it seems a good one for you. But don't say 'yes' if you'd rather not. Just think it over a little."

He turned his back on her, and, going over to the mantelpiece, examined a quaint old China group of an Englishman, Scotchman and Irishman, seated together, entitled "Auld Lang Syne." A long silence followed; then Susannah spoke. She had a remarkably sweet, soft voice, and the doctor looked round quickly.

"If I do say 'yes,' Dr. Evesham," she said, tremblingly, "it will be because—you—wish me to; for no other reason."

She raised her eyes to him as she spoke. They were beautiful eyes, and sent a thrill through the medical officer.

"I wish you to say 'yes!'" he exclaimed, coming toward her.

"You have been so good to me; you saved my life when I first came here. I should never have recovered but for your care and attention. I always shall"—she clasped her hands tightly together—"you are the only friend I have, and there is nothing I would not do for your sake."

The passionate warmth of her tone startled Dr. Evesham. He caught both the hands with which, ashamed of her fervidness, she was about to cover her face, and said, tenderly, "My poor girl! Then you shall never say 'yes' to this offer."

The board was waiting impatiently and the squire and parson had almost broken their long friendship over the prize "gatepost" magnolds, when Dr. Evesham returned with Susannah West.

"Well, doctor, I hope you have brought the young woman to see reason," said the squire.

"I hope so," said the doctor, drily.

"Has she said 'yes'?" inquired the squire and the butcher in a breath.

"She has to me, gentlemen," said Dr. Evesham, endearing, "I am going to marry her myself!"

Rare Presence of Mind.

"We had a purty excitin' time up to the op'ry house last night," said the village storekeeper. "Some of the young fellas was givin' an amateur performance of the Merchant of Venice for the benefit of the public library, and the house was packed with people. Jest between the first an' second acts some o' the scenery caught fire, an' it looked for a few minutes as if the buildin' was goin' to burn down. They managed to git the fire out, though, before much damage was done.

"Was the audience frightened?" inquired the traveling man.

"Didn't know nuthin' about it till it was all over, an' they was safe outside. Jim Jones, he's the op'ry house manager—he knowed they'd be a panic if the people found out that the place was on fire, so he told 'em all to go out quietly.

"How could he do that without telling them what was the matter?"

"Wal, it would 'a' stumped most people, but Jim is purty smart. He jest stepped out in front of the curtain an' announced that Miss Beatrice Smithers wuz goin' to recite 'Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight.' The hull audience left without losin' no time."

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A WOMAN SCORNED.

Earl Alston's Bride---Driven Forth Into the World Upon Her Wedding Night---The Serpent in Love's Eden.

By ELLA MARTIN,

Author of "Not His First Love," "A Brave Coward," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1899.)

SYNOPSIS.

Alston Hall stands close to the Atlantic shore. Lady Alston lives there with her only son, that she flirted with Count de Villfray before her marriage, and who, that the count had sworn vengeance on account of the murdered husband's father. She had left the Alston estate in England for fear of the count and brought Earl and Edith, her daughter, to live in the secluded old house on the New England coast. Virginia, the supposed child of a dead friend, lost in a wreck at sea, is adopted by Lady Alston. Virginia had a brother, but he had not been found. Earl Alston vowes vengeance on Count de Villfray for the murder of her father. Virginia is beautiful and cruel, overhears Lady Alston's confession and also Earl's statement that he loves Lillian Dorne, a beautiful but poor seamstress. Virginia is in love with Earl, and plots to destroy Lillian. Edith is impressed with Hero, Alston's handsome coachman of the Alstons. Earl is married to Lillian Dorne and brings her home to Alston Hall. Karl St. Clair is summoned by Virginia. He and Virginia have done Lillian harm. He and Virginia have done Lillian harm. Virginia pass for her brother, declaring Earl and his bride. Karl declares he threatens to murder Virginia unless she sends many a long day.

He immediately sought his wife's apartment, an apartment luxuriously furnished and decorated in crimson and gold. Beneath a chandelier of wax tapers sat Inez St. Clair---a proud, dignified woman of tropical beauty. Her hair was of a purplish-black color, and was wound in a coronet on the top of her queenly head. Her eyes were as black as midnight darkness, and shone like two stars. Her features were classical, her skin was olive, and her cheeks and lips were stained a rich carmine hue.

On a soft tiger-skin rug, which was spread before the open hearth, sat a boy of about four years of age, dressed in a suit and looking like a little prince. He resembled his father inasmuch as he was handsome. His hair was a bright yellow and lay in clustering curls all over his baby head, and his eyes were blue as the summer sky.

He was sleeping quietly, and Karl, as he stood looking down upon him, muttered with his teeth hard as he thought of what the future of the boy might be.

He crossed over and stood by his wife's side, and bending over her tenderly, kissed her white, smooth brow.

"Inez, do you love me?" he asked, softly. She flashed an adoring look upon him from her glorious midnight eyes.

"Ah, you know, Karl!" she said.

"I am going to put your love to the test," he said, slowly, anxiously, watching her face the while. "I am going to ask you to leave your home---the spot which you know is so dear to you---and to follow me across the sea, where we will find a new home, and one even more beautiful than this. Will you go?"

She looked up at him surprisedly, but did not speak.

"Will you go unquestioningly?" he asked. "Inez, there is where the greater part of the test comes in," he added, laughing lightly, but his laugh held an anxious ring.

"It is a strange request," she said, rising and looking at him, keenly.

His face fell; seeing it, she added, quickly, "but I will do anything you wish me to, Karl."

"Will you go at once?" he asked. "A fever of unrest is stirring within me, Inez. I want to leave this place tonight. What do you say? Will you humor me in this?"

And without waiting for her answer, he launched into a description of the setting out immediately, and the sunny lands across the ocean.

His enthusiasm awakened an answering chord in his wife's breast and she entered into the spirit of it at once.

"We will leave the house in charge of the housekeeper and her husband," he said, "and discharge the other servants. As Luce is about to leave you, we will procure you a maid before we embark."

"Please order your packing done at once," she said, her instructions making it a conveyance for the luggage is got ready."

"But why do you ask, Karl? I do not want to catch a certain steamer?"

"Yes, and we have no time to lose." And he kissed her fondly as he added, quietly to him further. He was filled with a wild, joyous excitement which he scarcely could help showing in his face and manner.

In one hour from that time he was in readiness. The carriage stood in the shadows of the avenue trees outside the gate, and the coachman was on the box, waiting. Karl was at the rear of the building, directing the loading of the baggage, and Inez was in the hall, her hat and wrap on and a small hand satchel in her hand. Little Leo was lying on a couch, dressed for the journey, but sleeping peacefully.

Lucette, the maid, came softly into the hall.

"Here is a packet of papers for you," she said to her mistress, in a cautious whisper. "It was handed to me at the door by a veiled woman, nearly an hour ago, with the instructions to find a chance to hand it to you just before your departure, and when no one else was by."

"You are not to mention having received it," she added, "until you have read it, and you are not to read it until you are out to sea. Those were her instructions, ma'am."

And the maid, who was a comely octoroon, swept her a courtesy and left the hall.

"I have not time now to open it anyway," mused Inez, and opening the handbag she placed the packet in it.

She wondered a good deal about the papers and the events of the night, but she asked no questions, and soon she was seated by her husband's side, leaning back among the cushions, with her child clasped closely in her arms, while the carriage rolled away through the night.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRIDE AND GROOM.

Meanwhile, at Alston Hall, the bride and groom had arrived. There was a bustle in the hall, then the heavy drapery was swept aside by a negro servant, in a shining shirt front and a swallow-tailed coat, and Earl Alston entered the drawing room with his bride upon his arm.

Edith arose from her seat by her mother's side and went forward to meet them and welcome to Alston Hall her brother's wife.

"Indeed, you have not exaggerated your bride's beauty," she said, as she kissed them both. "And the name Lillian is as sweet as its owner."

"Thank you," replied Lillian, in her low, sweet voice.

Then noting Lady Alston's attempt to rise, she added:

"No, do not rise, dear Mrs. Alston, I will go to you and receive my blessing---you see, I expect one." And with a low, sweet laugh, she glided forward and was met by Lady Alston's side.

"Heaven bless you!" murmured that lady, as she kissed the sweet mouth bent above her. "You have made my son happy," and that is sufficient to make me love you."

Earl looked on with a pleased smile upon his fair, handsome face.

Ah, well, let him smile while he can, while his heart is light as everything seems fair, for oh; so pitifully soon his smiles will be changed to tears, and his love into gall and wormwood. Let him gaze on that fair face while it is near to him for soon its beauty will be repulsive to him---soon the touch of that lily hand, which he presses so much, will be to him as an adder's sting."

As Lillian rose to her feet, Edith took from an ebony table a wreath of glossy leaves and vivid passion flowers, and the bridal bonnet, placed the wreath on Lillian's golden head.

"There, now you are ready, still, I think lillies would suit you better. But see, mamma, dinner have fallen."

"The heat is so intense," murmured Lady Alston, "anything will do for me, my dear. I am quite overcome with it."

As long as Lillian lived she never forgot the night that followed---the faded lilies for a crown of passion flowers. She never forgot the dinner, the solemn flowers were hateful to her ever afterward. Just then it was a relief to her that the wedding banquet was served.

"Edith," said her mother, "give me your arm and I will try to reach the dining room. On account of my indisposition there will be no ceremony. Earl, you will lead, looking around, "where is Virginia? I had not missed her before."

"Here," answered a clear voice, as a white-robed figure arose from the tapestried entrance at the left of the drawing room. "I have been in search of a suitable present for the bride, but as it is all I could find." As she spoke she held up to view a small, sparkling penknife.

Earl turned impatiently upon his mother's arm.

"Really, Virginia," he said, "your tastes are positively uncanny. But allow me," he added, taking Lillian, to present my mother's special charge, Lady Virginia Winfield."

"Virginia Winfield," murmured the bride, under her breath, "surely she has not heard the name before; then she recovered herself, and held out her hand in greeting.

As Virginia bent and kissed it with much reverence, she shuddered slightly at the touch of those burning lips, and at the look of hate which filled the dark eyes.

"Here is my gift to you," Virginia said, again holding out the stiletto, "take it, it may serve you well some day. It is an heirloom, and has a drunk blood."

No one paused to question how the Lady Virginia Winfield, a child of the South, came possessed of an heirloom of her family.

Lillian did not take the wicked-looking stiletto from my lady's extended hand, and seeing her shrink from it, Virginia turned and motioned the servant, who had announced the readiness of the wedding feast, to approach.

"Hand this to my maid," she said to him, "and instruct her to place it on the bride's dressing case."

"Virginia," said Earl, in an aside tone, "are those golden serpents which you wear continually coiled about your neck and arms, heirlooms, too? And if so, how came you in possession of them?"

The topaz eyes flashed wickedly, but the guilty color crept into the usually pale cheeks of Lady Alston's protegee.

"I did not claim it to be an heirloom of mine, my lord of Alston," she retorted, so low that Earl alone heard her, and the words were hissed rather than spoken.

Then Virginia glided away with the noiselessness that characterized all her movements; and Earl led his bride into the banquet hall.

It was late when the bride was shown to her apartments. Lady Alston and Edith retired immediately, and Earl was about to follow the example of the others and repair to his rooms, when a horseman galloped up to the door which the butler was in the act of bolting for the night.

Without any hesitation the horse stepped outside and demanded to know what was wanted.

Earl heard their voices and stepped into the hall just as Gibbons opened the door again.

"Who is it?" demanded Earl of the butler.

"A man, my master," answered the servant, "who says he's got a message for you. He's been riding like mad, and by how it's a matter of life or death."

"Go into the house, Gibbons," he will see him outside."

He stepped out upon the stone steps, motioning Gibbons to wait for him in the hall.

The moonlight which fell in silvery patches on the ground through the thick branches of the trees completely enabled him to see the iron-gray steed that stood restlessly champing the bit at the door.

It was needless to inquire how horse and rider got into the grounds, for Earl knew there were turnpike-down places in the low stone wall that bounded the estate.

For a moment he stood peering into the face of the horseman, but as he seemed accustomed to the darkness, he made out the outlines of the figure before he startle the horse.

"You wanted?" he asked, at last.

"I want to see the master of Alston Hall," was the reply.

"Very well, I am he. What do you want with me?"

"I came from the beddde of one Jules Monterey, who lies at death's door, and who wishes to communicate with you at once. Monterey, who lies at death's door, and who wishes to communicate with you at once. He says it is of the utmost importance to him part to you. I am instructed to take you back with me at once. You must come at once or it will be too late."

Earl did not reply for moments; he was thinking deeply. How could he tell that this was not some trap? How could this stranger, whose name he had never before heard, know of the midnight visit of the Count de Villfray. Had he sought them out in order to complete his revenge? That was hardly probable, he thought, still it all seemed very strange.

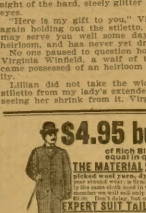
"Where is the residence of this Jules Monterey?" he asked.

"At a distance from here," answered the man, "you will not be able to reach there before the day after tomorrow. You will need a horse, as the gentleman has no means but to ride on horseback than in a carriage; for it is in the interior, and the roads are somewhat rough and hilly."

"It is nothing to me," he added, "whether you go or not. I have given you my message, that is all. I am to impress upon you the importance of the case. My duty ends there. Ah, stay! Here is a note, which I had forgotten; maybe you may find some explanation in it."

The man felt in an inner pocket as he spoke, and presently drew forth a sealed envelope and handed it to Earl.

He broke the seal and opened it into the hall in order to read it." Earl said, as he received it from the man's hands. "It is too dark here.



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"IT IS IGNORANCE THAT WASTES EFFORT." TRAINED SERVANTS USE SAPOLIO

"Allow me to suggest," said the other, "that you waste no time, lest we should arrive at our destination too late."

Without further words, Earl entered the hall and read the brief note by the light of the hall lamps.

It ran as follows:

"Knowing that I have not long to live, I have determined to send for you and tell you all I know concerning the fate of one who is dear to me, but whose unhappy condition I have been instrumental in bringing about. I refer to the true Virginia. Winfield for whom your mother has searched for so long. I can also communicate to you facts which will enable you to find her place of abode.

"After having spent years of search, it is not probable that you will refuse to come to me, even though you may count it a long journey. But in case you should hesitate, I beseech you for the sake of the two lawful heirs to the Winfield estate, not to refuse, or delay one moment, for the sands of my life are nearly run—the end is near."

That was all. The letter had been dictated evidently, for the signature was in a different hand, and the characters which formed the name were so irregular as to be almost illegible. And although he signed it was very feeble.

Earl at once decided for a moment what to do, but slowly all thoughts of its being a plot to decoy him into a trap vanished.

He thought the story plausible. He had always had vague suspicions of Virginia, and now that this letter spoke of his mother's search as being fruitless, he was beginning to feel convinced that she was an adventuress. He disliked Virginia, had always done so, and if she should prove to be an imposter he would be only too glad to see her ousted from her false position under his roof.

But how was he to leave at this inopportune time? If he went at all, he must go at once, he would have no time to see any of the household, or to bid good-by to his bride. He must leave her on the very day of their union and remain away from her side for at least two days. But there was no time in which to debate with himself, he must decide at once.

He aroused the dozing butler and explained to him that he was called away on important business, and after leaving a message for Lillian, and naming the time of his return as near as possible, he bade Gibbons bolt the door behind him.

The rider of the gray horse was awaiting impatiently his appearance.

"Well," demanded the man, brusquely, "what have you decided to do?"

"I will go with you," answered Earl. "Wait here till I fetch a horse."

A few moments later he returned with a steed as black as midnight, in readiness to mount, and waiting into the saddle he bade the man lead the way.

Following the other's lead, he leapt the wall in its lowest place, and rode out into the highway.

And a moment later the two horsemen were lost to view in the gloom outside the gates of Alston Hall.

Day dawned. The sun rose high in the heavens and its radiance tesselated the gray pile of ruins known as Alston Hall. Myriads of insects chirped in the tall, rank grasses, and the songs of brilliant-plumaged birds filled the soft southern air with melody.

The inmates of the Hall were not astir until long after the sun had risen, owing to the late hour at which they had retired on the previous evening.

When at last they sat at the breakfast table it became known that the master was absent. As it were greatly surprised and even puzzled, but were forced to acknowledge that it was unavoidable.

Lillian read the hastily written note which Earl had left with the butler for her with a strangely aching heart. A chill seized her, and a cloud as of coming sorrow settled over her. She managed to appear cheerful throughout the day, however, and none guessed the restlessness with which she awaited her bridegroom's return.

Lady Alston's health was somewhat improved, but she was obliged to recline on a sofa in the parlor most of the day, while Edith sat beside her and waved incessantly a fan of peacock feathers, with a slow, languid motion.

She talked on various topics while thus engaged, principally of Captain Winfield, whom she feared might grow lonely.

Then as the shadows of evening advanced, Lillian grew more and more restless. Finally, the shadows had settled over the old Hall, wrapping it in deepest gloom, she wound a light scarf about her golden head and stepped out into the balmy southern night.

Away up in the topmost branch of one of the stately trees that helped to shade the huge pile of ruins, a mocking bird was perched, pouring out its rich melody, and Lillian paused involuntarily and glanced up into the leafy branches intent on discovering the singer, when suddenly it became silent. She was about to turn away when she observed it fluttering down, down until it rested on the lowest branch and there remained silent and stationery among the scarlet passion-flowers that twined themselves about the limb.

By the moonlight which lay like sifted frost-work on the waving green leaves, Lillian could make out the outlines of its body. Then suddenly she watched it. It rose slowly upward, pouring out its entrancing, melodious music as it rose, till it had reached again the topmost branch. Still singing, it rose into the air and circled slowly around nearly splitting its throat in its efforts to fill the night with its exquisite melody.

It was delicious to stand here in the shadowy and starry night dreaming and listen to its soul-entrancing song. Nothing could transcend this melodious music, in Lillian's opinion, not even the song of the nightingale.

But Lillian wearied of watching the bird after awhile, and turned slowly away with a long-drawn sigh. Another weary night and day must drag themselves away before her bridegroom's return.

Oh, how long the time seemed, but it would pass at last, and then, oh, then! How happy she would be.

How proud and noble he was. He had not a fault in her adoring eyes.

"Here is my gift," Virginia said, "take it, you may need it some day."

Deeply absorbed in thoughts of him, she wandered outside the gates and began pacing slowly back and forth beside the low, stone wall.

As she turned for the third time, she started back in fright, falling into the arms which rose to her lips, for, directly in her path stood the form of a man, his evil face only partially discernible in the darkness, but two fiery eyes peered into her face, and a gruff voice full of menace spoke her name.

At the sound of that voice Lillian gave a gasp of fear, of loathing and despair, which died away on her colorless lips, while the word "lost" repeated itself in her burning brain.

How she managed to keep her senses she never knew, for a dim certainty of future misery stupified her, and she could neither move nor speak. She could only stand with wide, staring eyes, her face death-white, her lips parted, and her white hands clasped tightly together.

An eternity of tense misery seemed to pass over her head, an eternity filled with despair, and in which she realized the past, the future, which she had entertained, reveled away like dew before the scorching sun. The present, the awful, soul-harrowing present held her in its breathless, benumbing embrace, while the grim, ghastly ghost of the past stalked with fiendish glee before her.

Shortly, the oppressive silence was broken by low, derisive laughter, the sound of which chilled her very blood.

"Oh, heaven!" she moaned.

The words left Lillian's lips as if wrung from her by some agonizing torture, and again the low, mocking laugh of the man struck a chill of death to her heart.

"Ah, my dear, you do not seem overpleased to see me," he said.

"I—I believed you dead," faltered poor Lillian.

"Aye, and hoped so, too, no doubt," was the sneering response. "Well, you will soon have the chance to fully realize the fact that I am still on deck. I've got you right where I want you, my pretty bird; I'll soon cage you, and clip your wings; I've had a long search, and when I found you some time ago, I waited patiently for this moment to come, for I knew it must come ere long."

"Mercy!" gasped Lillian, with white, stiff lips; "I am innocent of any intention to do wrong. I thought you were dead. Be silent, and I will go away from here at once and never see Earl Alston again."

"Yes, you will do just that," said the man, firmly, "and you will leave this place with me!"

"Oh, no, no!" cried Lillian, in alarm; "not that—anything but that!"

"Either that or a prison cell," he said, firmly, and poor Lillian cried out in agony, for she saw the fate that had overtaken her, and knew that there was no way of escape.

"Mercy!" she gasped again, but she knew there was no mercy for her.

"None whatever," he answered, resolutely; "you know better than to expect mercy from me."

"Decide at once. Which will you accept, your lawful husband, or a prison cell? Choose quickly."

"I will go with you," came in a husky, strained whisper from her stiffened lips, after a short interval of oppressive silence. "I must go into the house," she added, "to procure a few articles."

"No treachery now," he hissed, "if you think to run away from me again, you are reckoning without your host. I know what to expect of you now, and I shall be on the alert. You cannot dupe me again."

"I understand," she answered.

"Not one word to Earl Alston to explain why you have deserted him," he cautioned. "Let him believe you false to him. Do you hear?"

"Yes," she replied, faintly, and darted from his side.

A low, exultant laugh broke from his coarse, thick lips, and he wheeled about and began to pace up and down the roadside.

One, two, three minutes passed, then a silent figure glided out of the shadow of the stone-grown wall, and crept stealthily up behind him; a hand was raised aloft—a flair, white hand, in which a long, shining blade was held firmly. The next instant it descended with the rapidity of lightning and was buried to the hilt between the man's shoulder blades, and with a gasping, gurgling sound, he fell face downward on the green grass beside the wall, over which hung the glossy vines and scarlet passion-flowers.

"My God! Lillian!" he uttered, in a tone of acclamation, then a death struggle and the figure crept away in the darkness, leaving him there by the roadside, still and stark, and still—stone dead.

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A Pathetic Sight.

The superintendent of the Sweet Springs mine undertook a thorough renovation of the mine the other day, and the first step preparatory to cleaning up was to remove the mules from the underground stables and put them out on pasture.

Some of them had not been out of the mine for months, a number had been below the surface for two or three years, and one had not seen the sunshine for seven years—as long as Jacob served for Rachel.

They were led from the mine, twenty-seven patient creatures, and turned loose in Morrison's pasture field. They stood about together, knee-deep in lush, green grass, and eyed red clover, with drooping heads and eyes half closed, as though dazed by their sudden change of circumstances. At last, as the sun dropped down behind Bowman's hill, one gray old veteran threw up his head and sniffed at the free, fragrant air blowing down the valley and in a body, not a little movement went through the whole group.

The old leader wheeled about sharply, took a long trot at the clear sky above, the brawling little brook chattering over the stones, and then, as though he could no longer hold himself, stiffened his tail, and send forth a prolonged, penetrating, strident heehaw-awaw, which woke the echoes over on Maple Ridge, and with an awkward, lumbering bound he started down the long slope.

In an instant the whole mass had separated and was in motion. Such running, rearing, kicking and jumping never were before seen—stiff knees, dim eyes and spavined joints all forgotten in the pure enjoyment of out of doors. They bucked and bellowed, ran and kicked, stopped for breath, then began again.

The whole village gathered at the fence to see the fun. Even the men and boys lounged and shouted, the babies crowed, and one or two women cried a little, for there were sorrows and lameness and weakness in plenty.

When it was all over, and they were rolling about and racing, forgetful of the hunger and thirst that might be satisfied by the running stream and grass.

Old Mrs. Bascom, who lives at the edge of the pasture field, was awakened in the dark hours toward morning by the rapid rush of hoofs thundering down the hillside, and turning over on her pillow she murmured, "Dear Lord, what who would a-thought that any livin' critter could be so glad and thankful for nothin' but air and freedom."

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THE VANISHING MEN.

Sharp Detectives Baffled---A Mystery of the Air---Playing at the Hazardous Game of Life and Death.

By MARO ROLFE.

Author of "The Crystal Sphere," "The Wooden Indian's Widow," Etc.

(Copyrighted 1899.)

SYNOPSIS.

Ralston Sprague, supposed murderer of Brantford Murrie, is pursued by Detectives Siddons and Dill. They come him in a room on the top floor of a nine-story building, when he mysteriously disappears. Aside they follow Sprague into a church and up the interior of the spire, where a gun discharges. They are dumbfounded. Ralston Sprague wants to marry Alicia Pitz-Allen, a rich heiress.

CHAPTER V.

"UP AGAINST THE GENUINE ARTICLE."

Dill immediately made a thorough search of room 502 in the Commercial hotel, from which Ralston Sprague had effected such a sudden and mysterious disappearance, the last of several equally sudden and mysterious disappearances which had been puzzling Dill and his associate and assistant detectives for some weeks.

There was no door to the room except that by which the detective and Ralston Sprague had entered, and the latter, before which Sly, the policeman, had stood guard and which he had not once opened during the while he and Sprague had been in it.

The room had not even a closet, and it contained nothing behind which a man might have concealed himself.

The window was open, but it was about a hundred feet from the ground and there was no means within twenty feet of it on either side by which a person could have descended.

A rope, the like of which serves as a fire escape where there is no better one, lay in a corner, coiled and tied, and the dust on it showed that it had not been touched for days.

If Ralston Sprague had disappeared like a disturbing view, his vanishing could not have been more mysterious.

When he had made this fruitless investigation, Stanley Dill looked keenly at Policeman Sly.

"Well," asked Sly, "what do you make of it?"

"I don't know what to make of it," returned Dill. "Have you any theory to suggest?"

"Never heard of anything like it before," replied Sly, "and, of course, I wouldn't set up to explain it."

Dill did not say whether he had ever heard of anything of the kind before, deeming it wise to be discreetly noncommittal on that point.

"Maybe if you watch awhile, he'll come back," said Sly.

"I don't imagine that would do much good," answered the detective. "At least I'm not going to waste time that way. He'll be going."

They left room 502 and Sly shut the door after them.

While they were waiting for the elevator to come up---it will be remembered they were on the top floor of the hotel---Dill saw a mirror some around an angle in the passage, and, walking away from them, evidently did nothing of the sort, proceed along the passage as far as room 502.

He paused before the door and appeared to be listening as if for some sound from within.

"Hi---!"

The detective gave this warning sound, so low that it could have been heard only by the policeman, for he noticed on Sly's part an inclination to move and feared the man at the door might be alarmed and depart before he could learn what were his intentions.

Feeling the pressure of Dill's hand on his cuff, the policeman stood perfectly still, and the two saw the man open the door slightly and hastily and peer inside.

Dill watched him with bated breath.

The man pushed the door open, passed into room 502 and closed the door as the detective was informed instantly by a faint click of the latch.

Dill drew his revolver and rushed into the room, which the man had left so that the door was illuminated by an electric light in the passage outside.

The man who had entered only a minute before him was not there.

Stanley Dill was the only occupant of the room.

He had now been fooled so many times in this way that he made no comment and further avoided any quizzical glances as the two went down in the elevator.

His short rest that night was almost sleepless.

When he awoke, at 8 o'clock, he saw that some one had pushed a letter under the door of his room.

It was signed Ralston Sprague, and read thus:

"You will never succeed any better than you did last night. You have done some great work as a detective, Mr. Dill, but you are now up against the genuine article. Be wise in time. If you want to communicate with me, drop a line to the general delivery addressed to Fantus Hunter."

Dill ground his teeth together as he read this mocking letter and put it away.

"Curses on him!" he exclaimed. "How did he get that letter under my door? How did he learn where I slept? I must look into it."

When he had dressed he hurried down stairs and called a woman who had charge of the room he occupied.

"Did you put a letter under my door?" he asked.

"No, Mr. Dill."

"Did any one go up there with a letter?"

"No one---the front door is locked yet and has not been opened since you came in late last night. In fact, Mr. Dill, there were no letters to come in. I don't understand how any one could have put a letter under your door unless it was done early last night, before I locked up."

Dill knew the letter had been put there since he had retired. He had implicit confidence in the woman. It was evident she could not explain the occurrence.

Dill had not seen Siddons or Tuncray Siddons. A newspaper which he bought by the way reported Siddons in all directions by criminals who left no trail.

Siddons was not a little surprised when his associate told him of the two mysterious disappearances at the Commercial hotel, the night before and the letter which he had received.

"You have received a letter," he suggested. "You know we've agreed before now that two heads are better than one."

"Did you see what is written on the back of this letter?" he asked. "It is in pencil, very small and very even."

Dill had seen nothing of the kind.

"What do you make of it?" he asked.

"It says, 'I could have killed you as easily as I could have killed Murrie and that's all, and probably it's true.'"

"That is true, Ralston Sprague may not be a match for us," gritted Dill, "but if we prove a match for him we'll have to do better work than we have ever done to date."

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE SWEAT-SHOP ROOF.

Tuncray Siddons made no reply, but the expression of his face betrayed the serious bent of his thought. After a minute, he said:

"And what will be the first move in this interesting game?"

"We must watch the general delivery department of the office and see who comes after any letter for Fantus Hunter." Sprague may send some unsuspecting person."

"That's so; but if we follow him he may lead us to Sprague, and that is still some useful discovery."

"True. Little quiet shadowing often produces good results, and in experienced hands it is not the most difficult thing in the world."

It was calculated that Ralston Sprague would call for mail at once, and he could by reply to his message into the postoffice before the office opened, and the detectives laid their plans accordingly.

About 4 o'clock a young man presented himself at delivery window No. 3 and asked for and obtained a letter addressed to "Fantus Hunter."

As he left the postoffice he was followed at a safe distance by Siddons, and Dill had detailed to shadow him.

At the German National Bank building, two blocks from the postoffice, Amsdell stopped a minute and was joined by Dill and Siddons.

"It's that young man with the brown derby and the gray suit and yellow patent leather shoes," explained Amsdell. "He got the letter and seems to be staying in town. Shall I follow him or will you do it?"

"We will both do it," said Dill. "Go along and keep on the opposite side of the street from him most of the time, so that you will not attract him or help us if necessary. Siddons and I will chase him up, sometimes on foot and sometimes in other times the other. If he gets on a car, you get on, too, and we'll follow along after."

Amsdell crossed the street and Dill and Siddons dogged the young man with the brown derby hat.

As they drew nearer to him they slackened their pace, not to be in any hurry, and a little, so that the two of them would not excite too much attention.

The young man they shadowed walked many blocks before he showed any signs of weariness. Then he went into a saloon.

"You follow him," said Dill to Siddons, "and I will watch outside."

When Siddons went inside, the young man was sitting at a table in a far corner, quietly sipping a glass of beer.

He did not seem to be in any hurry, and after fifteen minutes had passed, during which the detective had watched him closely from behind a newspaper, Siddons began to suspect that Ralston Sprague expected to meet his messenger here.

But another quarter of an hour passed and there were no developments. Sprague did not come, nor did the young man show any disposition to go on. When he had finished his beer he called for a cigar, lighted it and settled himself to enjoy a smoke.

It now become evident that he was killing time. For what purpose was not so evident.

About an hour from the time Siddons entered the saloon an old man dropped in and sat down beside the man the detectives were watching.

They soon engaged in conversation, but Siddons was too far away to hear a word they said.

The old man ordered something for the two and while the waiter was attending to them, Siddons saw the young man with the brown derby hat pass a letter to the old man.

"Ah!" he thought, "it is this old man who will deliver the letter to Ralston Sprague. I must inform Dill or he will get out of sight before we can start in to shadow him."

He found Dill outside and quickly told him what had occurred and described the old man so minutely that Dill could not fail to recognize him when he should leave the place.

When he got back, the two men were still talking and the man was just putting some letter or paper in his pocket.

Soon the young man went outside and Dill followed him away.

When the old man appeared, Amsdell took charge.

If the two had thought to outwit any one whom might have suspected they were following them, they had not succeeded thus far.

When Siddons emerged from the saloon, he saw Dill waiting for him not half a block away.

"This young chap is the one to follow," he said, quietly. "Amsdell is keeping charge of the letter to the old man was just a blind. Ralston Sprague never would watch for him or his messenger at the postoffice and follow him away, in the hopes of finding out his address. He has taken this way to put us on the wrong track. But if we follow the old man Amsdell has gone, we'll lose no one."

Now they followed them a short time across the river and into the factory district beyond. Dill did not seem to be in a hurry, but walked slowly, keeping, for miles on the same side of the street.

If he knew he was shadowed, he did not manifest it in any way.

He was not more than an hour after they had parted from Amsdell, before that worthy slightly injured an electric car and without past them and into a side street where he waited.

Siddons, on after the young man with the brown derby hat and Dill joined him.

"I lost him," Amsdell said, bad-humoredly.

"How?"

"Well," with a mirthless laugh, "he went up."

"You don't mean to say---"

"Yes, I do. He went into a three-story factory building, a sort of sweat-shop. I followed him up to the top floor, close to his heels---and if he knew I was after him, it didn't worry him a bit. He went into a little room at one end. I chased him through it and up a ladder to the roof. There he let a trap entrance-way built on the flat roof. When I was at the foot of the ladder he was at the top. He did not open the door and step out on the roof, and the door closed when I got up there. I had to take my eyes off him going up the ladder. When I got over to the top and looked for him he was gone. The door was locked, you understand."

CHAPTER VII.

WAITING AND WATCHING.

Another man had gone up.

This deepened the mystery for Dill.

"Did you examine the place carefully?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And what did you discover?"

"Nothing. As I told you, the place was

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simply a shelter over a hole in the roof. It was about six feet square. Of course, it had but one door. There was nothing like a window. If any part of either wall was open, I failed to find it out."

"And that is all?"

"That's all. He simply 'went up,' as that old woman said. I guess she isn't so crazy after all."

The two joined Siddons with whom they caught up within five minutes and who was afraid of showing the young man with the brown derby hat, the light pants and the pastel leather shoes.

"Siddons," exclaimed Dill, "that old man has disappeared almost before Amadell's eyes. It was another case of going up. We've got to find out what that is or we will never solve the mystery of the death of Branford Murrie."

"It seems mighty mysterious."

"So it does; but we must watch this fellow shad so closely that there will be no opportunity for a repetition of the miracle, or whatever it may be."

"We'll try to do that," Siddons answered, "but we'll have to increase our speed. You can't walk faster."

And so he was. Amadell assumed his old place on the other side of the street and the shadowing went on.

At length the young man entered a house. It was an ordinary three-story-and-basement residence, and it stood in the center of a row, entirely detached on all sides.

"If he goes upstairs," suggested Amadell, "I suppose we will lose him."

Dill shook his head.

"No," he said. "I don't pretend to explain the mystery of those disappearances, but you can depend upon it there's nothing ghostly about the matter. It's all perfectly in accordance with natural laws and we'll learn all about it sooner or later. When we do we'll command the situation. The house stands alone. Besides, nearly all of the disappearances have occurred at night and have been, in some manner, assisted by darkness. There are three of us. We must so station ourselves as to command a view of every side of this house. If we do that, no one can leave it in any manner, without our knowledge."

The three detectives concealed themselves in different places, and no one could have left the house in any direction without being seen.

From time to time different persons came out of the front door and went away, here and there. They were evidently servants and there was nothing in their appearance to excite suspicion.

The sun went down. The city grew gray and gloomy, but the streets were lighted.

Through the long hours the detectives had watched without wearying and with never a thought of abandoning their posts.

At half-past two the front door opened again and for the first time in nearly two hours, the figure with the brown derby hat came out and descended the stone steps.

Dill meant to shadow him, but he was not a little doubtful as to results.

If the shadowed man was yet to meet Ralston Sprague, much might be learned by following him.

But if Ralston Sprague was in that house and the young man had been conferring with him, the detective felt that there was little more to learn by pursuing the man who had obtained the letter at the postoffice.

Dill was prepared for either emergency, however.

He gave out his advice and instructions clearly and in few words.

He and Siddons would follow the young man with the brown derby hat. Amadell was to telephone Marston to join him and the two would watch the house until they were certain Ralston Sprague was or was not there.

This programme was carried out.

The two detectives walked closer to the man they followed, now that it had become dark and the danger that they might lose sight of him was increased.

He appeared utterly oblivious of their attentions and went on his way apparently with as little care as a school boy.

The night was dark, except at intervals when the moon, in its third quarter, peeped for a few brief moments through rifts in dark banks of clouds. To add to the gloom, their chase had led them on a portion of the city where the streets were but scantily and imperfectly illuminated.

Not more than three hundred feet ahead of Dill and Siddons was the young man in the brown derby hat, whom they believed to be a confidential messenger of Ralston Sprague.

Why had he walked so far and why he had chosen this remote way when he could have covered the same ground practically by means of the electric cars over more public streets and in a pleasanter way, they were at a loss to understand.

Suddenly he stopped and leaned half stooping against a tall telegraph pole.

He appeared to be doing something with his feet—just what, the detectives could not see.

Siddons managed to get near enough to discover that he was climbing to his ankles a pair of climbers, such as are used by linemen in the telegraph service.

"He's going to climb that telegraph pole," thought Siddons, as he hurried back to tell Dill what he had discovered.

"Well," answered Dill, "if he does that we've got him sure. We can wait at the top of the ground as he can roost up there. I guess."

The two detectives sank down in the tall grass. At that instant the clouds parted and the moon flooded the place with its light.

The young man passed a letter to the old man.

"But how are we to do it?"

"We'll let him know he is seen. That may scare him out of the business. He knows he can't get away."

Then Dill cried out:

"Hello, you up there! We've onto your game, and you'd better drop it."

The man defied them.

They could not understand exactly what he said, but they knew that he swore at them and laughed at them.

Again Dill warned him to desist in whatever he might be doing.

The man laughed again and this time he laughed louder.

Siddons started.

"I have heard that laugh before," he asserted.

"Sounds familiar to me," assented Dill.

The man who went up in the spire had that same laugh," went on Siddons, in a tone of conviction.

"To be did," muttered Dill, "but he didn't look like this fellow."

"Same size—same voice," persisted Siddons. "May be he was disguised last night."

"That's so. Well, we'll find out for certain when he comes down. Curse our luck!"

This exclamation of discomfiture was drawn forth by the fact that the clouds had closed up again and the scene was in total darkness.

"Come down from there," yelled Dill, fiercely. "If you don't we'll shoot! We're officers of the law. We'll come unless you fulk work up there."

The man laughed again derisively and unpleasantly.

For answer Dill shot straight up.

The ball from his revolver must have whizzed near enough to the man up the pole to cause him to suppose him that he was in danger.

"He didn't shoot to hit him," murmured Dill. "I'm quite certain this is the man we chased up in the steeple, and if so he may be more valuable to us alive than dead."

"Let's both fire together and make him think we mean business," proposed Siddons.

"Let 'er go!"

Crack! Crack! The two revolvers in the detectives' hands spake simultaneously and two balls went spanging up among the wires and could not have gone far from where they had seen the man.

Again his jeering laugh rang out on the night air and Dill remarked, coolly:

"Siddons, that fellow has got plenty of nerve. I guess we'll have to pink him before he'll believe we're masters of the situation."

They fired three times, each in rapid succession, and they heard the wires singing over their heads and half expected the man to come tumbling down on them.

But nothing of the kind happened.

Instead they heard a long series of tantalizing laughs, not from directly overhead but from a point from a considerable distance to the eastward, and the sounds seemed to recede and at length died away.

A moment afterward the moon struggled through the clouds and the place was flooded with its light.

Dill uttered a cry of surprise and dismay.

"The devil is in this," said Siddons at the same instant.

The man up the telegraph pole was not to be seen.

He had disappeared as completely as Ralston Sprague had disappeared from rooms in the first Western building, the National Bank building, and the Commercial hotel; as completely as the two men had disappeared from the old house at Wauconda and McLean streets; as completely as the old man whom he had met and to whom he had given a letter that day had disappeared from the locker-like shelter on the factory roof; and as completely as this same man had, they believed, disappeared from the spire of the church at Ardmore on the previous night.

The detectives looked blankly into each other's faces.

They felt baffled and helpless, and did not come to themselves again until the moon went behind a cloud and Amadell's voice was heard:

"Come on," growled Dill.

Siddons did not reply. Dill went ahead and he followed. Soon they reached a street car line and were on their way down town.

When they got to their office they found Marston and Amadell awaiting them.

Marston handed Dill a letter.

"Ralston Sprague sent this," he said.

"Ralston Sprague—sent it and—you?" questioned Dill, slowly and wonderingly.

"Why didn't you and Amadell bring him along with it?"

"Because the affair took a different turn—we couldn't control it, you see."

"Explain."

"He came out of the house, with the letter in his hand, and—"

(Continued on page eleven.)

BEAUTIFUL PATTERNS FREE.

LADIES' WRAPPER WITH SHIRT WAIST YOKE AND SLEEVES. NO. 7688.

To make this wrapper in the medium eight years of age for a girl of size will require nine and one-half yards of material, one-half yard wide, or 36 inches wide. The material is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

GIRLS' COSTUME, NO. 7669.

The pattern, 7669, is cut in sizes for girls 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 years of age.

LADIES' SHIRT WAIST—To be made with Bias or Straight Frontband Sleeves and with or without the Lining and Yoke Facing. No. 7695.

To make this waist for a lady of medium size will require 2 yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, 7695, is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

BOY'S DRESS, NO. 7694.

To make this dress for a boy 4 years of age will require 2¾ yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, 7694, is cut in sizes for a boy 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

GIRLS' SHIRT WAIST WITH STANDING AND SAILOR COLLAR, EITHER OF WHICH MAY BE OMITTED. NO. 7702.

To make waists in this style, may be of cotton, wool or silk fabrics, a full dress or costume, resulting from the use of plain and figured material, as here shown, will require 2¾ yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, 7702, is cut in sizes for a girl of 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 years of age.

CHILD'S DRESS WITH GORED EFFECT, NO. 7676.

To make this dress for a child of 4 years of age will require 2½ yards of material 36 inch. material. The pattern, 7676, is cut in sizes for girls 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

7653—LADIES' CIRCULAR SKIRT, made of striped or figured French Bandout CENTER and of Satteen are seam.

To make this skirt for a lady of medium size will require 3 yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, 7653, is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch waist measure.

LADIES' SACQUE NIGHT GOWN WITH POINTED YOKE. NO. 7698.

A costume in this style is made of stripes or figured French Bandout CENTER and of Satteen are seam. desirable for traveling or general wear.

To make this gown for a lady of medium size will require 6 yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, 7698, is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

An Unparalleled Offer.

The patterns shown above are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions accompany every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of the above patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without an equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once. Give the numbers of the patterns and bust measure desired. Enclose money and address, PATTERN DEPARTMENT, CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO.

They Didn't Catch a Whale.

1. "Gee! It must be——

2. ——a whale!"

3. ——But——

4. ——it wasn't.

"The Pirate's Daughter," an exceedingly thrilling and heroic story, by Commander Don Jenardo, will commence next week. It is laid in West India and is founded on historic facts relative to Bolidar, the Buccaneer Sea King. Ledger readers will find it a great treat.

No Front Seat.

Jaggles—Do you know why Croker prefers London to New York?

Waggles—That's something I could never understand, for in London the tiger always rides behind.

The Icy Boston Maid.

Dolly—I thought you had Miss Waldo in bathing with you?

De Garry—She's just left. Won't you come in now and take the chill off the water?

A Fine Memory.

"How about that V. Darby, that you have owed me for so long a time?"

"I declare, Brown, you must excuse me, but it has escaped my mind completely. I'll fix it up in a day or two."

On the next corner Darby met Smith.

"Smith," he said, "I was going to speak to you about the money you owe me."

"Do I owe you any money?"

"Yes; don't you remember you borrowed $2 of me a year ago the 17th of June? It was about twelve minutes after eight in the evening. These little transactions have a knack of sticking in my memory."

Not a Sherlock Holmes.

Griggs—Am I right in assuming that your friend Cawkins imbibes rather freely at times, and also that his wife takes measures to resent such conduct on his part?

Briggs—Why, yes; but how did you know?

Griggs—Oh, I met him about midnight last night. He was trying to shake the iron fence of a vacant lot and was remarking somewhat thickly: "Lesh me in, will you? I say, lesh me in;" that's all.

He Found Out.

A young poet sent a poem to an editor, together with the following note:

"I am not quite sure whether this poem will prove available or not, but I enclose it, as it costs only two stamps to find out."

In due course the editor returned the poem, accompanied by these significant words:

"You have blown in your two stamps."

Their Portion.

Freshman (showing young lady about the campus)—Here's the Seniors' fence. That fence belongs to the Juniors and this one the Sophomores have.

Young Lady—Oh, yes; how very interesting. And what do the Freshmen have?

Freshman (gloomily)—They have trouble in large and generous slices.

Overheard in a Cemetery.

Boyle—I am strangely opposed to cremation. I think it is carrying things entirely too far.

Coyle—How so?

Boyle—We would then be compelled not only to earn our living but to urn our dead.

The Frugal Lover.

Bessie—George loves me more than he used to. He takes me out twice as often since summer began.

Jessie—That's because ice cream doesn't cost half as much as oysters.

No Cause for Concern.

Brown—I hear Jones is sick. I wonder if it's anything contagious?

Smith—Don't worry; if it is it won't matter. He's too close to give anything to anybody.

Hardly the Right Word.

Cadwallader—Funny that a woman can never throw anything straight.

Jenkins (whose wife has red hair)—H'm, not funny exactly; rather providential, isn't it?

Beecham's Pills will dispel the "blues."

A Beautiful One.

Jaggles—Did he go to an artist to have his black eye painted?

Waggles—I couldn't say, but there's no doubt the fellow who gave him the black eye was an artist.

Those Dear Girls

Miss Oldgirl—I don't like the color of my hair.

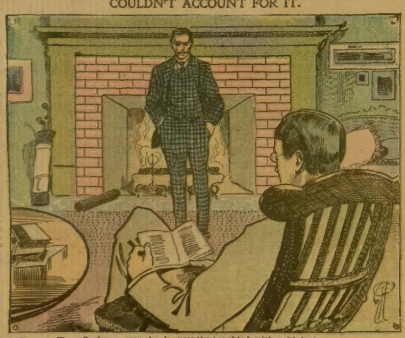
Miss Youngthing—Don't let that bother you, my dear. It can't be long now before it turns gray.

His Status.

Visitor—Is that one of your statesmen?

Native—Oh, no; he's merely a senator.

COULDN'T ACCOUNT FOR IT.



Brown—Tom Jackson says he is greatly troubled with cold feet.

Smith (surprised)—Tom Jackson? Why, I always thought he was a bachelor!

Niece (discussing bicycle attire)—Are you as much against "bloomers" as ever, uncle?

General McCurry—Certainly, my dear. It must be skirts or nothing. That is—I mean—er——

Mrs. McCurry—General!!!

Illustrated Expression.

"He couldn't stand the strain."

A Valid Objection.

Mr. Citydweller (to suburban real estate agent)—I only find one fault in your town, Mr. Boomengo, but that makes me decline to buy a residence here.

Mr. Boomengo—Why, what is the matter?

Mr. Citydweller—I noticed today as we have been driving about that all your finest houses are owned by physicians.

His Answer.

Klondike Clergyman—Walrus Bill, do you take this yere woman, Slanting Annie, for better or worse?

Walrus Bill (frankly)—I hope it's for better, parson; it hain't for worse, anyhow, for she's as bad as she can be right now.

He Knew.

Singleton—Do you agree with the doctors who consider kissing dangerous?

Benedick—Oh, yes.

Singleton—What dread effect do you think is likely to arise from it?

Benedick—Marriage.

A Sad Travesty.

Willie—Why is it called the underground trolley, papa?

Waggles—Because it has put so many poor fellows under ground.

Equal to the Occasion.

The poet now finds that this season of woe is not such a terrible thing;
He changes his poem "Beautiful Snow"
To one on "The Coming of Spring."

A Huge Success.

Jaggles—Is that a good cipher code he uses?

Waggles—It must be. Half the time he can't make out the dispatches himself.

He Knew.

Teacher (after reading Jack and the Beanstalk)—Now tell me what is a Giant?

Freddie—One of them fellers what can't play ball.

Non-Committal.

Papa—Which day does my little boy like best—Christmas or the Fourth of July?

Bennie—Uh-huh!

Appearances Against Him.

Cashier (to president of the bank)—I wish you would call in an expert, please, to examine my accounts and see that everything is all right.

President (startled)—Why, what's the matter?

Cashier—Nothing, only I have been a teacher in our Sunday-school for three years and have just now been made superintendent.

Probably Not.

Bunting—Here's a newspaper headline which reads: "Fell Down an Elevator Well."

Larkin—What of it?

Bunting—I was simply wondering if he remained well long after he reached the bottom!

It Depended.

Hibbler—What salary do you consider yourself worth?

Scribbler—Well, if some editor should send for me I ought to be worth at least $5,000 a year, but if I applied for a job it wouldn't be much over $50 a month.

Would Seem Not.

Browne—There is always fire where there is much smoke.

Towne—Huh! Guess you never tried to build a fire in the kitchen stove at 5 o'clock in the morning.

No Need to Worry.

He (gloomily)—My salary has been cut down 10 per cent.

She (brightly)—What's the difference? I know where I can buy lots of things marked down 30 per cent.

A Suggestion.

Knicker—What wonderful execution Chilly does on the violin.

Bocker—Yes; he ought to take the place of the electric chair.

He Read the Papers.

Teacher—Now, Tommie, you may tell me the name of the angel of death.

Tommie (promptly)—Alger.

Pleasant Assurance.

Baldynut—Please don't shoot, mister. Highwayman—Don't be afraid, stranger. I wouldn't harm a hair on your head.

STORYETTES.

Long-Headed Lincoln.

Perhaps no anecdote ever told of Mr. Lincoln illustrates more forcibly his "long-headedness" in laying plans, not even the incident when he asked the "Judge" a question in his debate with Mr. Douglass, which may be told as follows:

One afternoon during that joint debate Mr. Lincoln was sitting with his friends, planning the program, when he was observed to go off in a kind of reverie, and for some time appeared totally oblivious to everything around him. Then slowly bringing his right hand up, holding it a moment in the air, and then letting it fall with a quick slap upon his thigh, he said:

"There, I am going to ask the Judge (he always called him The Judge) a question tonight, and I don't care the ghost of a continental which way he answers it. If he answers it one way it will lose him the senatorship. If he answers it the other way, it will lose him the presidency."

No one asked him what the question was, but that evening it was the turn for Mr. Douglas to speak first, and right in the midst of his address, all at once Mr. Lincoln roused up, as if a new thought had struck him, and said:

"Judge, will you allow me to ask you one question?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Douglas.

"Suppose, Judge, there was a new town or colony just started in some western territory, and suppose there were precisely one hundred householders—voters—there; and suppose, Judge, that ninety-nine did not want slavery and one did. What would be done about it?"

Judge Douglas beat about the bush, but failed to give a direct answer.

"No, no, Judge, that won't do. Tell us plainly what will be done about it?"

Again Douglas tried to evade, but Lincoln would not be put off, and he insisted that a direct answer should be given. At last Douglas admitted that the majority would have their way, by some means or other.

Mr. Lincoln said no more. He had secured what he wanted. Douglas had answered the question as Illinois people would have answered it, and he got the senatorship. But that answer was not satisfactory to the people of the south. In 1860 the Charleston convention split in two factions, and "it lost him the presidency," and it made Abraham Lincoln president.

Her Fault.

"Lucky here!" snarled Jason Hawbuck, whose nose was sadly abraded, and who walked with a decided limp, "what did you mean by tellin' me that there 'ere old brindle demon I bought of you yesterday wasn't a bad cow? Why—gol-slam it!—first thing I knew I went to milk her last night she hauled off an' kicked me head over heels, jammin' my skull into the milk-pail at nearly ja'nitis' my fool neck. Then she got me tangled up in the halter-rope somehow, an' drug me across the cow lot an' back an' forth so many times that I couldn't keep count of 'em, an' kicked me every once in a while, for good measure. There's skurcely a bit of whole skin left on my body big enough to make a common-sized watch pocket. If she ain't a bad cow! I like to know what in tarnation would make you consider a cow bad?"

"Well," mildly replied Aaron Alfred, "if she'd done that wilfully an' maliciously, I s'pose I'd consider her bad, but bein' acquainted with her ever since she was a calf an' havin' known her to cut up that same caper a good many times before, I've decided that she's only just thoughtless. There's a good deal of difference between wickedness an' mere thoughtlessness, you know."

Why He Was Like the Prince.

"Now," said a schoolmaster, as he displayed a bright five-shilling piece between the tips of his finger and thumb, "the little boy or girl that puts a riddle to me which I cannot answer will receive this as a gift."

"Any more?" he asked, as soon as silence was restored and no one had claimed the coin.

"Yes, sir," sang out a little fellow from the farther end of the school. "Why am I like the Prince of Wales?"

"The Prince of Wales!" said the master, thoughtfully. "The Prince of Wales?" he repeated to himself. "Really, Johnny, I see no resemblance in you; I'll give it up."

"Because," cried the lad, joyfully, "I'm waiting for the crown."

How He Did It.

"I wish, John," remarked Mrs. Feversham, "if when you get time you would take down the parlor stove and carry it to the attic. I'm tired seeing it around in warm weather."

"Very well, Maria," responded Mr. Feversham, "I will do as you wish." Thereupon he proceeded to roll up his hands and spit on his sleeves prior to tackling the job.

Carefully placing some old newspapers around he removed the pipe without spilling a particle of dust on the carpet. He then called an assistant, and the two men lifted the stove as tenderly as they might an infant and transported it to the attic. Not a profane word escaped the lips of either man; neither did they bark their knuckles against the close turns in the hallway. When Mrs. Feversham returned everything was clean and shipshape, and Mr. Feversham was sitting comfortably smoking and reading the morning paper.

The explanation of this remarkable mystery lies in the fact that John was a professional tinsmith and was doing a bang-up job for his own household. Those who expected to see that Mr. Feversham got covered with soot and the entire neighborhood with blasphemy will now take five minutes off to recover from their surprise.

On the Safe Side.

"Doc," said a man who had approached one of the surgeons at the recruiting station, "I wish you'd examine me and see if I'm eligible for enlistment."

"You must file your application in the regular way with the officer in charge," replied the surgeon.

"I haven't time to do that now," the stranger replied. "Why can't you take a look at me and see what my chances are, anyway? It's very important that I should know."

"Well, take off your coat and vest and let me listen to your heart the first thing."

The examination was very short.

"Ah," said the surgeon, after he had listened for a moment, "there isn't any use going on with your case. You'll never do. Why, you might almost as well have no heart at all."

"Hurrah for war!" yelled the man who had been rejected, as he pulled on his coat and hurried into the street. "War! War! War! Down with the cowards who don't want blood! Hurrah for the crush of matter and the wreck of worlds!"

Evidence of Ability.

"Well," said the merchant prince, "what excuse have you to offer for asking me to let you marry my daughter?"

"I will be honest with you," replied Fergus Finnington. "My principal excuse is that I am deeply in debt. Of course I love your daughter, but I could live even if that love were shattered. Living without the fortune that I expect to come with her hands is another matter. I must make a raise in some way."

"Um," the old gentleman returned; "how much do you owe?"

"About $20,000."

"And what property have you to offer as security for all this?"

"None. I never was worth a hundred dollars in my life."

"Say, I want you in my family. A man who can owe $20,000 without any assets is worth saving."

How He Won Her.

"Do you think," asked the beautiful, starry-eyed girl, "that the world is degenerating?"

The young man who had for months loved her in secret saw his chance. Every time he had ever attempted to say anything sentimental to her she had switched him off into politics or the social problem, but at last the moment for which he had longed had come. Drawing in a full breath he replied:

"No! How could the world degenerate with women doing so much to run it? How could the world be otherwise than better since you have interested yourself in it?"

That evening her mother said it would be all right, no matter what papa might think.

Success at Last.

"I see Von Daub, the artist, has a new suit of clothes, a new silk hat and a very pronounced look. He must have sold some of those pictures that he had in the salon."

"No; he's been hired by a cigar company to decorate billboards."

A Censor of the Drama.

Mrs. Richmond—Why did you refuse to go to the theater with your husband last night?

Mrs. Broxonborough—I want to go alone to a matinee first and find out if it is a proper play for him to take me to.

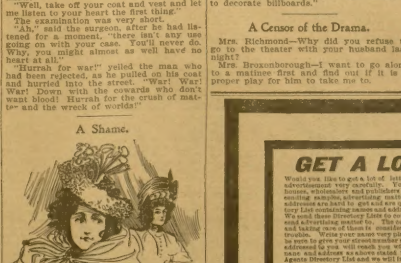
She Was In Error.

"This is very bad taste of you," remarker Mrs. De Tanque, when her better half returned in an intoxicated condition. "Your makin' mistake, m' dear. Bad taste won't show up 'fore this' mornin'."

Look out for Don Jegardo's great novel, "The Pirate's Daughter." It will begin in next week's Ledger.

ON THE GOLF-LINKS.

Miss Tea—Are you never touched by poetry?
Mr. Driver—Well, not so often as by posts.—Judge.



"She is full of music."
"Yes what a pity she allows it to escape."

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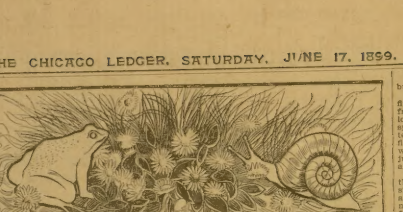
There are indications that the popular sympathy manifested in this country for Mr. Rudyard Kipling during that writer's dangerous illness has failed of appreciation by his object. It is quite clear that Mr. Kipling does not like Americans nor America—a fact which need cause no great concern, for which he recalls the incident of the American lady who called to pay her respects to Miss Louise de La Ramee, better known as "Ouida," "I do not care to meet Americans," said Miss de La Ramee, bluntly. "I look upon them as vulgarians." To which the daughter of Uncle Sam pleasantly made reply: "Your conclusion is quite natural, madam, seeing that it is the American ladies who buy three-fourths of your nasty books." Similarly it may strike Mr. Kipling that in decrying the intellectuality of the Americans he is paying no great compliment to his own writings, which have a large sale in this country.



A LITTLE BROTHER.

BY MARY E. BAMFORD.

Sitting on one of the three or four benches in a large, cell-bordered room in the city prison, whither she had come to see her brother Dobey, Agnes looked about her. The city missionary who spoke here Sundays had brought her, and Agnes had intended to bring the baby, who was her own and Dobey's little brother, but the missionary had thought she had better not.

Agnes had a weighty errand here. Baby brother was two months old now, and had not yet been named. Her mother had died when baby brother was only a few days old, and the father had died several months before, and now, with Dobey "doing time" in the city prison, it was Agnes' place to name baby brother?

The women and children who lived in the tenement had suggested name after name, but Agnes would not undertake the grave responsibility of accepting any. Dobey was fifteen years old, and she but thirteen, and she had authority in the matter. So she had come to consult him, and now was waiting with the religious meetings should be over and she could speak to him.

The women's meeting was first. About twenty of the tenement women had congregated in the hall were sitting on benches in the cells. Agnes was acquainted with each woman, and two or three had blackened eyes. One young woman had a baby with her, not a little stand, and when he sang some of the women joined, with voices out of which their life had taken all music, in the music.

After the service was over the women gathered around Agnes, congratulating her on him to give them stamps and writing-paper. Then they began to question her and ask for anything, but looked at Agnes.

"Some of 'em's mighty good scrolling, and they're in the dark cells. That's the reason there ain't more here today," the missionary explained.

Agnes nodded. The missionary came to her, and the women went out of the room to the rotunda, where the men's meeting was to be held. Agnes was left alone out of their cells as the women had done. In the lower corridor of the prison, at the opposite end, were rows of doors, above was another row of doors, each made of latticework of iron.

As the missionary began to sing, faces appeared at the doors, and men came out of their cells. Agnes tried to see which face was Dobey's, but could not. Some of the faces of the cell doors did not frame faces. Perhaps Dobey did not care to come to the meeting, or perhaps he was hung for misdemeanors.

Then the missionary's talk was over, he took a great armful of papers and began to dodge through the cell doors.

"Come with me," he said to Agnes, "and when we get to Dobey's you can talk to him."

Agnes followed, helping to carry some of the papers, and when each man received an envelope, just as the women had done, but never one single letter. What was the use that a stamp could be exchanged for a cigarette?

The two went around the prison, and then passed to the upper tier of cells. From one to another they went, distributing papers.

"Give me a stamped envelope, won't you?" asked a voice at one cell. The asker's eyes were bright as he looked.

"I guess you don't want any stamped envelope," said the city missionary, laughing. "You've got a visitor, instead."

The boy's face was not a bad one, but it was marred by a look of defiance that slipped away, though, as he and Agnes looked at each other.

"You see, little brother's got to be named," said Agnes, "and I don't know what to name him, because you're a boy, same as he is."

The boy's face lighted up at his cell door. "I ain't fit to name him," he muttered.

But Agnes waited. Dobey did indeed wish he could name his baby brother, but he was in prison, and he said so.

"Isn't fair to give him a name from jail," he added. "Can't you find a name him?"

Much to Agnes' disappointment, Dobey clung to his refusal. She watched the prisoners form in line. The men were many of them young, and on their clothes were all alike, of wide black and yellowish-gray stripes. Each man carried a can and spoon. Dobey had told her that down at the tables in the long dining-room she would get a tin pan of stew, three or four potatoes, and a little loaf of bread. But Agnes was much disappointed about not getting the name, and went soberly with the missionary out of the building.

As they went along the dusty road outside the prison Agnes grieved that the missionary could see that something troubled Agnes.

"What is it?" he asked; and Agnes told of Dobey's refusal to choose a name.

The young missionary had started his work determined to meet every emergency, and he rather prided himself on doing so. He had never named a baby, but he considered himself equal to it. He pondered a few minutes, running over Hebrew and Greek cognomens, with their meanings.

"It might be 'Seth,'" murmured the missionary to himself under his breath. "Seth, meaning 'set in place of another.' Perhaps the child is set in his brother's place, to be what he might have been."

"What?" asked Agnes, listening.

"Would you call him Luke?" suggested the missionary, looking down at her.

"Luke?" repeated Agnes.

"It means one who gives light," he said.

Agnes looked at him, only dimly comprehending.

"Luke, she repeated. "Well!" and she sighed with relief. When she left him she asked him if the next time that he went to the city prison he would tell Dobey that little mother's name was Luke.

"Yes," the missionary promised. He sighed as the child went away. "Poor little Luke! Poor little tenement-house light!" he said.

Agnes hurried home to the tenement house, and told Mrs. Haggerty, on the fourth story, who had been very good to Agnes and the baby since Dobey had been "took up." Mrs. Haggerty had let Agnes help about the washings and ironings, and she Haggerty and Agnes of both Agnes and the baby till Dobey's time should be up. Mrs. Haggerty was greatly pleased she would have the eye on Dobey when he came out. "He's a rare boy, and a rare boldness in the boy," Mr. Haggerty had said. "Treats the idling too much, and being ready-fisted has made him respected. I'll be to see Dobey out again, and I'll keep an eye on him myself, I will."

"You're after naming the baby Luke, are you?" Mrs. Haggerty asked Agnes, when Agnes came home with her news. "Well, it's not a bad name, Aggie, and he'll walk with him a bit now, Aggie, and he'll go to sleep."

Mrs. Haggerty took him and walked the floor with him, and told him that his name was Luke, and Agnes saw that her full-skirted, red head smuggled in Agnes' neck.

Agnes was very much interesting with Mrs. Haggerty went on up in the fourth story, and the three drew near when Dobey was "took up."

"He'll be coming home tomorrow," said Agnes to Mrs. Haggerty, as Mrs. Haggerty is going to have an eye on him."

It was not till about the next day that Dobey came in the shadows, shamefaced and smiling, as Agnes Luke into his arms, and Dobey looked at the child. The lad was glad that Luke did not know where he had been all these days, and Agnes knew that. But aloud Dobey said to Agnes, "What'd you do to him, Aggie? Changed him? Couldn't you name him yourself?"

"Sure, and I did," Agnes interposed Mrs. Haggerty. "Sure, an' the little fellow'll soon know himself by his name, Dobey. And now you've a chance to name him yerself, if yell taken it!"

But Dobey shook his head. He held his little brother more closely. Only Luke, of all the tenement, but Agnes knew that it was for the first time in his life Dobey had spent weeks in the open air. "Luke's the best I couldn't forget." But they wouldn't, and the police would have an eye on him. Dobey would be good. Dobey was good. He did not look out.

Dobey's head drooped lower. Luke stirred, and the boy gathered little brother to himself almost fiercely. He kissed little Luke yet!

Dobey sat holding Luke the rest of the evening. Nobody knew the great lump that rose sometimes in Dobey's throat. He hadn't been a bad boy, and he had named little brother himself, but he wouldn't be the means of bringing down on little brother grow up to find out that his name had been given him by a jail-bird. Besides, Dobey had thought that Agnes deserved to name the baby more than he did, for she had not been to prison.

But now Dobey felt a fierce jealousy of the word "missionary" as he kissed little brother. What business had the "missionary" to name baby? He wanted Agnes dutifully to name the baby himself, and now that "tenement-house light" was gone. But Dobey hated the "missioner" for it! Dobey always hated "missioners" anyhow. But Agnes did not consume the baby, for a man in the city prison had said that if anybody had a right to name the baby, that baby would be sure to have bad luck. Dobey would not have the baby take Luke. He held him closely.

"Agnes," he said, in spite of his little brother, he does," said Mrs. Haggerty, out in the hall, to her husband.

Dobey heard it, and it seemed as if Dobey did not think much of anybody else. Even Mrs. Haggerty and Agnes, "Agnes," he did not prove efficacious. Dobey worked sometimes at draping, but he would take spells of idling, going off by himself, looking defiantly at any who approached him.

In some of these missionary, who often visited this district, tried to waylay Dobey. The boy would not have it! Dobey was sure that the missionary did not know Agnes' name. In the meantime, Dobey thought a little exultantly of men in the city prison who had told the missionary that they wanted to write to their mothers, but having got stamped envelopes from the missionary, never wrote to anybody, but secretly traded the stamps for cigarettes.

For some men the kind missionary had obtained cheap spectacles, that they might read the papers he brought, and Dobey knew of several pairs of spectacles that had been traded away over saloon counters when men were released from prison.

Dobey continued to scorn the missionary, but Dobey worshipped little Luke.

One afternoon there went in to the city fire department an alarm. A fire, started from an ashbarrel that leaned against a loose board structure used as a bank, had sprung swiftly to the higher, overhanging tenement buildings. The dry walls, the flimsy stairways and the light additions were quickly caught by the flames that jumped from one substantial tenement to another.

Before the galloping fire-horses reached the place and a line of hose could be laid, six of the tenements were blazing. It looked as if the whole block would go. Most of the men of the tenement families were away from home at this hour of the day. The women and children snatched what they could and fled.

In the fourth story of one of the tenements, Agnes and Mrs. Haggerty, used to the multitude of city sounds, and talking somewhat noisily themselves, with shut door, knew nothing of what was happening till screams and cries of others of the fourth story told.

"We're afire!" screamed Mrs. Haggerty. "Run for home, Aggie!"

She rushed out, screaming. Agnes sprang into the inner room, snatched little Luke, wrapped in a shawl, and ran out into the hall. Mrs. Haggerty had disappeared. Dense smoke was rolling up the corridor. Agnes could hear the screaming and calling of other people. There was a crackling of flames. She ran, with others. As she reached the stairway, the smoke met them, they seemed all on fire. Suddenly the floor of the house before Agnes had with a roar the flames shot up.

Screaming with terror, Agnes fled back. Somewhere across the blazing hallway, she heard Mrs. Haggerty screaming wildly. "Aggie! Aggie! Jump! Jump!"

There was a roar of flames. A girl fled ahead of Agnes.

"Where are we going?" shrieked the other girl. "Aggie! Aggie!"

The whole floor of the hall seemed going down. Clasping Luke, Agnes ran back into the room, where the fire had not yet laid fled elsewhere. Agnes heard the floor of the hall crashing. She greatly closed the door into the hall, and running to the back window of this room, she threw it with a wild idea of jumping out.

One look at the straight fall of four stories to the ground below made her shrink back. Across the alley was a building, somewhat resembling another, but the alley, though quite narrow, was too wide to jump.

None of the firemen were in sight. The men with engines were in front of the building. Agnes heard shouts and others that were threatened, and dragging out women and children.

Agnes screamed, but no one heard. There was a window opening on the fire-escape outside Mrs. Haggerty's shut door. She dared not open the door, for all she had had was a rush of flames. There was no escape from this room.

Clasping little Luke tightly, and with terrified eyes watched the floor. Little jets of flame began to spring up here and there through the cracks in the floor of the room. The floor began to smoke. Agnes fled back to the window and felt of the floor. The boards were hot.

"Luke," she said, breathlessly, "the floor's afire!"

Quivering little tongues of flame that went up, and died down and came up again. Then there was a thick smoke through the cracks where the jets of smoke had been. Soon a hole burned in the floor, and the fire leaped up nearly to Agnes' feet.

Agnes fastened Luke tightly around her neck with the shawl, and climbed out onto the window-sill. Luke cried a little in her ear, frightened by the smoke. The room would ifate him. The flooring was giving way, dashing for air herself. She balanced herself on the sill and gradually rose outside the window, her fingers desperately clutching the window-sill, and then by her back to the depth below her, her face toward the already heated side of the window.

Through the glass she could see that the room was full of fire. She moved to one side of the sill as far as she could, fearing that the flames would burst out and set her cotton skirt on fire.

"I hold on just as long as I can, Luke," she said. "Oh, poor baby! Poor baby! I'll hold on as long as I can."

She held on. It seemed as if the shawl, tight around her neck, would choke her, and the child would fall. Agnes kicked the sash inside the window. Luke stirred, and Agnes was afraid that he would get his head work himself free and fall from her back downward. Agnes moaned.

"O Luke, keep still!" she begged, as if he could understand her. "I'm holding on, Luke, I'm holding on."

She held on. Before her face the window-sash was blazing. Behind her the flames seemed glittering. A tongue of fire darted up and burned one of her feet. She drew it and moaned with the pain. Her arms were all one ache. The baby's weight seemed pulling her over backward.

"I'm holding on, Luke," she moaned. "I'm holding on, I'm holding on."

The flames flashed against the window inside. The sash-cord burned. The glass were burnt. Smoke poured out the window, mingling with the flames. Agnes wound and got on this ladder. Don't look away down."

Agnes' fingers grasped the sash desperately. Luke was full of flames. Agnes still she could kneel on the ladder. Her feet were burning. Luke was burning, fire. She shut her eyes and crawled out on the horizontal ladder—crawled fast as she could till she knew the dreadful chasm below was passed, and she found herself on the roof of the cannery.

"Hurry, Aggie!" said the missionary. "We must hurry!"

The cannery roof was on fire. The cannery itself was full of flames.

"Come this way, quick," said the missionary.

They crept along the edge of the burning

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.

Some ten years since I occupied a house that had a small garden entirely surrounding it. The architect who planned it evidently believed in high rooms as necessary for our climate, as each story was fully twenty feet from floor to ceiling, consequently I could look down from the second story of my house into the yards and rooms of my neighbors on either side without any difficulty, and, in fact, could not well avoid it. The house on the right hand, a queer, old-fashioned affair, after standing vacant a long time, was at length taken by an odd-looking old man, whom I saw going over it one day, and the next day it was occupied. Not being of a Paul Pry disposition, I paid little attention to my new neighbors; only found them quiet. The old house had scarce more noise about it than when vacant, and I congratulated myself that some man, with half a dozen boisterous, romping children, had not taken it.

But one day an old family servant remarked: "Miss Jennette, dare's something odd 'bout folks what's done moved next door, shore, dere is, honey day's on'y enough people, no doubt, and you need not spend your time looking after their oddities; you have enough to do to look at your own."

cold feeling that was unpleasant. She did not answer when I asked her where she suffered pain, but moaned in a pitiful manner that made my heart ache to hear.

"Where is your master?" I asked the old negress.

"In his room, mistiss; dis is his day, and mistiss' day to watch him."

"What on earth do you mean, aunty?"

"Dis is his day to get drunk and mistiss' day to keep sober, but her last two days she's bin takin' brandy and all at once she laid down and don' just like you see her, till I got scared and went for you, ma'am."

"Do you mean to say that your master and mistress take turns in getting drunk?"

"Yes, ma'am, I dus. He gets drunk one day and she gets drunk the nex' day, but her last two days to keep other she's bin sittin' drunk, too, so she's had a whole week. She's bin drunk and it's made her sick, I reckon."

Though thoroughly disgusted and shocked at such a tale of horror, I felt averse to help the hapless woman.

"Get some warm water for a foot bath and we will undress her and get her into bed, and then you go into my house and tell mammy to send one of the servants for Dr. Arnault to come at once."

With the old negress' help I gave her a bath, undressed her, and laid her upon the lounge; we could not get her upstairs to her bed room; the low, pitiful moan being all the sound that came from her lips, and on her face seemed indelibly fixed a look of horror that fascinated me.

I could not keep my eyes off her as I sat there alone with her. While gazing on her I noticed I had a faint smoke issuing from her mouth and nostrils, and, an instant after, the old negress was crying, raising me false, a pale, blue, lambent flame came creeping from the mouth and played over her face, and in a moment it seemed to gather over the whole body, the arms, the eyes, the hands, from the tips of her fingers shot little flames, the whole body was covered with the fiendish thing; the poor woman writhed in torture indescribable, and an odor that was filthy in the last degree smell filled the room. I could not move, I was utterly paralyzed with terror, and when the doctor and the old negress entered my room I was in a dead faint.

They told me afterward that she never spoke, the doctor could not relieve her, nor arrest the flame; water poured upon it increased it, and when the flame died away there was nothing left but the burnt and charred body that crumbled beneath the touch like so much cinder; and yet, strange to say, the bed on which she lay was not injured by fire, but covered with a greasy soot that you could scarce wash off.

The Vanishing Men.

(Continued from page seven.)

ter in his hand, and handed it to me and left.

"My compliments to Mr. Dill and say to him this is the answer to the letter he addressed to Fantus Hunter."

"But why didn't you bring him in?" asked I all.

"That's a story that knocks out everything that has happened of late," said Amadeil, earnestly.

This remarkable detective and mystery story will be continued next week. To-morrow will be the last chance to get the Ledger's special subscription offer on pages seven and thirteen.

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AMONG THE COUNTERFEITERS.

Losten Swamp Island---Thrilling Perils in the Woods---The Boy Heroes of the Clam River.

By J. M. MERRILL.

(Copyright 1899.)

SYNOPSIS

Nevin Tatham and Keith Kimberly, two adventurous lads, go hunting and get lost on an island among the swamps. They are attacked by a dog, which Keith kills with his rifle. A girl appears and attacks them for [illegible] Nevin [illegible] Mrs. Langdon [illegible] returns to a [illegible] Dampers [illegible] Nevin [illegible] Dampers and [illegible] wood. Keith discovers [illegible] Dampers [illegible] Nevin [illegible] Keith [illegible] Dampers [illegible] Keith [illegible] Dampers [illegible] Nevin

"Stand off, you lean monkey!" snarled the settler as Nevin approached. "Don't you dare lay your hands on me."

"Do as I tell you, Nevin," said the rifle-bearer, grimly. "If he attempts to harm you I will shoot him in his tracks!"

"You are outlaws—robbers!"

The boys paid no heed to the invectives of the baffled rascal, nor did he make the least resistance when Nevin obeyed instructions, going through his pockets to find several sample dollars of a bogus nature, and a revolver.

"Keep everything," said Keith, as the searcher glanced inquiringly at his sturdy chum. "We may need these things as evidence in the future."

The rage of Dampers was now deep but silent. He believed that resistance would seal his doom, and he was not yet ready to lay down his life in a vain struggle against Fate.

"Now, then," said Nevin, after having disarmed Dampers, "I'll bind his arms, he'll be safer that way. I was thinking of this when I peeled the moose wood."

It was this work that had kept the tall boy away during the early part of Keith's encounter with the outlaw settler. After binding the man's arms behind him, Nevin proceeded, despite the protests of the vic-

"It's my gun as sure as the world," said Keith.

tim, to secure his ankles in the same manner, after which he rolled his prisoner over on the ground, where he lay in a condition of utter helplessness. Keith regarded these operations with intense satisfaction.

At first he had felt disposed to censure his chum for deserting him at a critical time, but now he realized that Nevin was seeking to aid him in the best manner possible, so reserved his censure entirely.

Dampers struggled and groaned, and appealed to June to server his bonds. The girl approached her father and seemed touched by his pleas. But she soon became satisfied with tears as she stood gazing, with clasped hands, down into his face.

"Don't leave papa this way, boys," pleaded June, turning toward the young Nimrods. "I don't believe he will hurt you if you untie his hands. See how the sharp edge of the bark is cutting his wrists! Mayn't I untie him, Keith?"

The speaker fell on her knees beside her parent, her heart remorseful over her past unthinking conduct. Her small hands were at work on her father's bonds when Keith spoke to her and drew her forcibly away.

"Stand off, June, you must not do that," said he, sharply. "He would beat you again if he had the chance. If he was free again he would murder Nevin and me. You must accompany us now."

The two boys hurried from the spot, Keith leading June forcibly along, since she seemed inclined to stay by her father in his troubles.

"Let go now, Keith," cried June. "I can take care of myself."

"No," said Keith, "I cannot permit it. You will have to go with us for the present. Our safety depends on this, my girl."

June ceased to cry as the determined boy led her further and further into the wilds. Keith saw that the girl's sympathies had been aroused at seeing her father bound and helpless, and he felt justified in not permitting her to jeopardize all of them by setting the rascal free.

CHAPTER XII.

A STARTLING SUMMONS.

The shadows of another night were falling with our young friends yet in the wilderness. After binding Terry Dampers as described in the last chapter the boys experienced but little trouble in escaping from the island in the swamp.

June became pacified, on the assurance of Keith that her father's friends would soon find and release him, and consented to keep the best company to Mill Point. The little party waded the shallows, expecting little peril, now that the woman Torchet. She was not there, however, much to the relief of Keith and Nevin. Forming a seat with their hands, they conveyed June, dry shod, across the water to firm ground beyond.

Being now on strange ground the boys trusted little June to guide them. She, however, soon became confused in the treckless depths of the hemlock woods, and sank down, at length, saying that she was lost. The lads soothed her disappointment, assuring her that they would be able to find the right way, anyhow. This prophecy proved a false one, and the tramp was continued until late in the day, without results. Nevin's loaf of bread was consumed before night, the larger share falling to June, who was very hungry after her many adventures of the morning.

"Night again, and we're still in the woods!" groaned Nevin, throwing himself at full length on the ground.

"So it seems," assented Keith, with a sigh.

"Will we ever get out of here, do you s'pose?" uttered June, ruefully.

"Sure," said Keith.

A tired lot they were, and ready to give over further effort for the day. Keith, however, did not feel content to rest until he had explored the woods a little further. He had seen several pine stumps just before they halted, which plainly indicated the presence of man at some time previous, although the blackened logs indicated that tree-felling had been done quite a long time since.

"I'll go on a short distance," said he. "I'm sure there must be a logging road not far away. If we can find it we'll be all right."

"I'm not so sure about that," returned Nevin.

Keith quitted his companions without reply. He had been gone less than ten minutes when a distant shout was heard. Nevin sprang quickly to his feet.

"That is Keith, sure," he said.

"Yes," agreed June. "Here he comes now."

"Well, Keith, what have you found?" the thin boy cried, as his chum came hurrying up, panting and excited.

"I've found a shanty," he cried.

"Derelict?"

"But it is deserted," concluded the stout boy.

"Oh, that's too bad," Nevin groaned.

"It will make comfortable shelter for the night, however," said Keith. "Or course there's a road which we can follow to some settlement."

Without further discussion the little party set out for the shanty discovered by Keith. It proved to be a roomy affair, and had once been used by log cutters. There were two rooms and the low log structure, which was found to be in a good state of preservation. The windows and doors were for a wonder, intact.

Nevin kindled a fire in the fireplace at one end of the shanty. He found enough boxes and barrels in one of the rooms for fuel. The boys were in good cheerful, and it was not altogether disagreeable, the night air being damp and chilly. Keith drew up a box near the blaze and seated June upon it.

"I declare, this is something like," said he. "I feel that our troubles will soon be over. I know it will be easy enough to make our way out of the wilderness in the morning."

"If we only had something to eat, how nice it would be," sighed Nevin, decorously lately.

"Yes, for I am so hungry," declared little June, as she spread her brown hands out to caress the heat from the fire. Keith stood leaning against the wall, closely scanning the girl's face. He saw something in the dark, olive outlines that puzzled and interested him. It seemed to him that he had seen that face a long time ago. He had had ample opportunity to study her face during the half day June had been with them, and the boy was becoming convinced that she was not wholly a stranger.

What was the mystery surrounding the little forest maid? Keith Kimberly was not yet ready to answer that question, but his busy brain was conjuring up all sorts of grotesque and romantic solutions.

He called to mind how startled Dampers had appeared at mention of his (Keith's) name on the day of their first meeting, and from this argued that the settler feared him and wished to remove him because of that fear. That Dampers was an assumed name the boy felt sure, from overhearing the man's mutterings while he was searching for his runaway guests.

"I'll get supper, boys," Keith decided, "and he will be able to solve the mystery when I tell them what happens. I know that a man by the name of Richard Harstrow once lived in Millville, and was wronged my parents, and doubtless this Clam creek settler is that man. His being so angry with counterfeiters will give father a good chance to have his old enemy punished."

At this moment Keith caught the eyes of June fixed intently on his face. She looked pale and ill, and the boy's heart was touched. He at once walked to her side and sat down.

"You are hungry and tired, June," he said, taking her hand.

"Yes, Keith, ever so tired."

"If we hadn't been afraid of inviting pursuit," said he, "we might have shot some squirrels. I am sorry now that we did not. Never mind, June, I'll see that you have a good breakfast at any rate."

"You're a good boy, Keith."

"You don't think hard of me now for shooting Tue, do you?"

"No; it was almost like an accident. I've got over feeling mad about that. Do you think papa has been found and set free?"

It was cruel to let him lie there as we did."

"Don't worry about Mr. June," returned the boy, quickly. "He is free, and hunting for Nevin and me before now. I wish you would tell me something about your folks—especially about your father. Has he ever been kind to you?"

"He was once, a good long time ago, when mamma died. Since then he has grown cross, and has beat me often."

"Then Mrs. Dampers is not your mother?" said Keith.

"No. She's been with us many years, though, and I have learned to call her mother."

"What about your own mother, June?"

"I was too young when she died to remember much about her. I remember one time that father beat her and threatened her with a pistol. Poor mamma cried then. After that, very soon, too, she sickened and died."

"Was this in the house where you now live?"

"No, it was somewhere else."

"Where was it?"

"That I don't know. It was in a city, I think, for I remember of looking out of a window and seeing people and horses continually passing."

"How long have you lived in the woods?" questioned the curious Keith.

"Oh, ever so long—a good many years, I am sure."

Keith sat musing for several minutes. Nevin sat near kicking up the chips cumbering the ground, with his heels. He watched his chum and June from the corner of his eye, and listened dreamily to what they were saying. He saw the backs close together and very suddenly gave a start and a grunt.

"What's the matter now, Nevin?" asked Keith, turning toward his chum.

"Nothing. Why?"

"I thought, from the noise you made, that you had hurt yourself."

"I didn't, Keith. I was just thinkin', that's all."

"A wonderful thing for you, sir."

The thin lad rose slowly to his feet and went out. When he returned some time later he bore an armful of cedar boughs. These he carried into the other room, arranging a bed for the tired girl. June was very tired and soon sought the couch of boughs, laying her cheek upon Keith's coat, which he kindly loaned for a pillow. The two boys dropped down upon the floor near the dying fire, with their weapons within reach. Being fatigued as well as hungry, the young Nimrods fell into profound slumber.

It was the first to awake. He started up, a very wide-awake boy indeed. His ears were startled by a piercing scream, which seemed to issue from the ground beneath. The stout lad bounded to his feet and snatched his rifle. As he did so a second scream greeted his ears, coming from the room occupied by June Dampers.

This highly interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger.

"The Pirate's Daughter," an exceedingly thrilling and heroic story, by Commander Don Jenardo, will commence next week. It is laid in West India and is founded on historic facts relative to Boldgar, the Buccaneer Sea King. Ledger readers will find it a great treat.

Making the Most of It.

"I say, mamma," asked little 5-year-old Willie, "are you goin' to give me another piece of pie?"

"Why do you ask, Willie?" said his mother, sternly. "Do you think you'll eat it if you ain't I'll eat this piece as slow as I can."

Her Method.

"I need ten more dollars before I can buy that new dress I want," mused Mrs. Brown. "Now, the question is, how can I get that amount out of John? Ah, I have it! I'll ask him for a hundred."

I CURE FITS

When I say I cure I do not mean merely to stop them for a time and then have them return again. I mean a radical cure. I have made the disease of FITS, EPILEPSY or FALLING SICKNESS a life-long study. I warrant my remedy to cure the worst cases. Because others have failed is no reason for not now receiving a cure. Send at once for a treatise and a Free Bottle of my infallible remedy. Give Express and Post Office.

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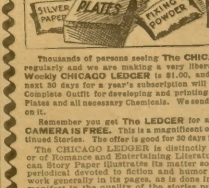

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ADAM'S TIME AND NOW.

By Milo S. Lathe.

There was a time in Adam's life,
When Fashion had her birth,
When he was glad to "take to wife"
The only girl on earth.

In forming Eve, it has been said,
That Adam had no voice,
But took the girl whom God had made
For want of Heaven's choice.

But now a lover may commune
With angels—less the wings—
Maids fairer than the blooms of June,
And sweet as bubbling springs!

Each maiden rode an hundred girls,
And tenders half a score of jewels!
They form a sparkling pot of pearls!
What dude may ask for more?

CAUGHT IN THE REBOUND.

It was county court day in a little county seat of a big and prosperous county in Indiana. Sleepy and sedate on ordinary days, the town was now full of life and bustle, for there would be many lawyers and country people in to attend courts, and many hospitable doors would be open to receive them.

At old Dr. Hapley's the preparations for dinner were more elaborate than elsewhere, for the doctor and his wife loved company.

"I hope Uncle Andrew will bring some nice men, aunt," said Betty Hapley, the doctor's niece from the city, who was visiting them.

"Haven't you enough men in the city to exercise your wiles on?" asked her aunt, with pretended severity.

"Now, if young Jackson or that old widower, Adams—you said he had only eight children, I think, aunt—would come, there might be some fun," continued Betty.

"Why, if Uncle Andrew had not come and interrupted I believe the man would have proposed to me last court day."

"Nev, Betty," remonstrated her aunt.

"Oh, it's quite true," declared the girl. "He had just asked me, tenderly, if I ever contemplated entering the holy bonds of matrimony, and I sighed and cast down my eyes and he reached out for my hand, when uncle had to come in and spoil it all."

"Betty, you ought to be ashamed to encourage him. The poor fellow has a heart and you may cause him great pain." Mrs. Happly spoke earnestly.

"Oh, pshaw, aunt, if that enormous dinner he ate gave him no pain, a mutual more or less won't hurt him." And Betty walked away determined to have an offer from Mr. Adams if he came that day. Betty was kind and generous in most things, but was very vain and besides this was "counting coffee" with her dearest friend, who was two ahead.

Mr. Adams rode into town that Monday morning with a purpose. He had finally decided that Dr. Haply's niece was the woman for him to marry and he intended to go through the form of asking her before he went back home. He was so sure of her that, when he stepped into the drug store for a drop of bitters before accepting the doctor's invitation for dinner and saw some rings displayed in one of the showcases, he concluded to buy one and have it ready.

"It's a foolish waste of money," he told himself, "but girls expect a ring, and she'll want a fine one." Accordingly he bought a fine one, after considerable beating down of prices. It was a large flashy ring set with emeralds and rubies, the combination of colors attracting him greatly. Considering the show it made he thought the ring cheap at $5. It certainly was a cheap ring. Armed with this offering, Mr. Adams wended his way to the doctor's hospitable home.

He was not giving up his freedom without some regrets, for, as a widower of only 40 years and owning a fine farm, he was made much of by the girls who lived in the same country neighborhood, despite the fact of his eight young incumbrances.

"If it wasn't for those children I wouldn't have even her," he thought as he approached the Happly home, "but I can't manage them, and servants is very expensive. After she gets broke in to it she'll do all right, if she is city bred. And casting regrets to the four winds, Mr. Adams was soon shaking hands with his charmer.

I am sorry to say that Mr. Adams was a glutton. At the dinner table he saw how many things he liked, and desired to try everything, that all the others were through before he had touched his dessert.

"I'll stay and keep Mr. Adams company, aunt," said Betty, flashing a mischievous glance at Mrs. Haply, "so you and the rest can go on. We'll excuse them, won't we, Mr. Adams?"

The gentleman gladly assented, for here was the opportunity he sought for making his proposal. Accordingly he plunged into his dessert and the proposal both as soon as they were alone. "I want to marry you, Miss Betty," he remarked, after tasting his pie and smacking his lips. "I've got a big farm and a nice house. I've heard you was a poor girl, but I don't care for that. You'll soon learn to be a farmer's wife'n, here be took another bite of pie—'and I'll keep a servant for you till you do learn. The children need a mother's care and I need a companion. I've bought a fine ring for you, Betty; let me put it on and call it settled."

"Sir!" ejaculated Betty, burning with indignation at the unexpected form of his offer, "how dare you speak so to me? Do you suppose I or any other girl would marry an ugly old thing like you with eight children thrown into the bargain?"

Flushed and angry, she flounced out of the room, leaving the astonished widower gazing after her with his mouth open. As his mouth was open, he mechanically put a big bite of pie in it and was somewhat soothed by its flaky deliciousness.

At this juncture, Eliza, a big, strong, comely, country maid, who had been Mrs. Haply's "help" for some time, came in. "'Scuse me, Mr. Adams, sir," she said, smilingly, "I thought everybody was gone."

"No," stammered Mr. Adams, "I was just a-finishing my pie. Mighty fine pie Mrs. Haply makes," he added, absentmindedly helping himself to another slice.

Eliza giggled.

"I made that pie, Mr. Adams."

"You did? And who made the biscuits and cooked that pork? Seems any I've eat for a long time."

Eliza dimpled with pleasure. "I cooked the whole dinner, for Mis' Haply was sittin'," she said, proudly.

Mr. Adams looked interested. An idea was slowly coming into his mind, appearing more feasible as he dwelt on it.

"I bet you can't sew," he ventured.

"Sew for the whole family when I'm home," said Eliza, shortly.

"Bet you can't churn and make butter and wash and iron."

"I just can, though." By this time Eliza was laughing and showing two rows of pretty white teeth. She looked very strong and attractive; she was certainly healthy and capable and would make an excellent farmer's wife. Mr. Adams' mind was made up. He put his hand in his pocket and drew forth the flashy ring.

"Will, I bet," he said, with an attempt at carelessness, "I bet you won't take this ring and promise to marry me." He was holding the ring out, and involuntarily Eliza reached for it.

"Why, Mr. Adams," she faltered, "why, Mr. Adams." But there was no angry indignation in her voice, and she was looking at the ring with sparkling eyes. She was surprised at the sudden offer, but was more than willing to accept it.

Five minutes later, when Mrs. Haply entered the dining room, she found Mr. Adams still eating pie, while Eliza, with a telltale flush on her cheeks, sat beside him twisting the ring about her finger.

Look out for Don Jenardo's great novel, "The Pirate's Daughter." It will begin in next week's Ledger.

The physician says the use of tobacco will shorten a man's days. You're wrong, doctor, any man's days will be twenty-four hours long whether he uses tobacco or not.

A Helping Hand

TO ALL SUFFERING WOMEN.

In addressing Mrs. Pinkham you are confiding your private ills to a woman—a woman whose experience in treating woman's diseases is greater than that of any living person—male or female.

You can talk freely to a woman when it is revolting to relate your private troubles to a man; besides a man does not understand—simply because he is a man.

Many women suffer in silence and drift along from bad to worse, knowing full well that they ought to have immediate assistance, but a natural modesty impels them to shrink from exposing themselves to the questions and probably examinations of even their family physician. It is unnecessary. Without money or price you can consult a woman whose knowledge from actual experience is greater in this line than any living person.

The following invitation is freely offered; accept it in the same spirit:

Mrs. Pinkham's Standing Invitation.

Women suffering from any form of female weakness are invited to promptly communicate with Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass. ***All letters are received, opened, read and answered by women only.*** A woman can freely talk of her private illness to a woman; thus has been established the eternal confidence between Mrs. Pinkham and the women of America which has never been broken.

Out of the vast volume of experience which she has to draw from, it is more than possible that she has gained the very knowledge that will help your case. She asks nothing in return except your good-will, and her advice has relieved thousands. Surely any woman, rich or poor, is very foolish if she does not take advantage of this generous offer of assistance.

The present Mrs. Pinkham's experience in treating female ills is unparalleled; for years she worked side by side with Mrs. Lydia E. Pinkham, and for some years past has had sole charge of the correspondence department of her great business, treating by letter as many as a hundred thousand ailing women a year.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM MEDICINE CO., LYNN, MASSACHUSETTS.

HOME AND TABLE.

SUMMER.

By Hester Caldwell Oakley.

...ay in the thought beneath the skies,
...and watched the soft white clouds, swift-
...mottled, pass,
...e sunlight, leaf-stained, filtered in such wise
...s enamelled with golden green the grass
...ath, till the white, mong tree-tops far and
...hich,
...hrough an Aeolian harp of deftest make,
...he lightest, airiest breeze swept lingering by,
...To skim with twinkling touch the wrinkled
...lake.
...he dream-begetting hum of insect life
...assed faintly through the fragrant summer
...air,
...he earth with myriad silent sounds was rife;
...The earth with myriad unseen sights was
...rare.
...o fathomless content—so deep, so deep—
...no sensuous, viewless thistle-wings ceased
...sleep.

Hints for Home Cleaning.

An old receipt for reviving and taking out stains from black silk is to boil a handful of fig leaves in two quarts of water until it is reduced to one pint. Squeeze the leaves and put the liquor in a bottle. Sponge the silk well with this liquid. Another method of restoring the color to black silk is to apply a little hartshorn or sal volatile to the spot soiled.

Rub the ink stains on a white damask tablecloth with a solution of oxalic acid, in the proportion of a tablespoonful of acid to a breakfastcupful of hot water. Should a reddish stain be apparent on the fabric after the stain itself has been removed apply a very weak solution of chloride of lime.

Articles made of amber should be cleaned by rubbing with moistened whiting, and again with a little pure olive oil, well rubbed in with a piece of flannel.

Try soaking a solid zinc bath for some time in very hot soda water, having it then well scrubbed with a hard scrubbing brush; this should remove the scum that seems to rise on the surface of this metal.

To clean the ivory of brushes make a thin paste of sal volatile, prepared chalk and olive oil. Rub this on the ivory with a soft rag and finally lay some of the paste on the wooden backs of brushes. This can eventually be brushed off.

To clean silver, place them on the hands, then rub well with fine oatmeal and renew the meal several times. Finally brush off the meal either with a soft brush.

Pure ether will remove oil stains from cloth coats. It must be first poured in a circle on the cloth outside the stain and then on the stain itself, which will then disappear. If not successful the first time it should be repeated.

Cleanse water bottles thus: Cut up a potato and pour some vinegar over the pieces. Put this mixture in the bottles and shake well. When clean, rinse in fresh water and drain till dry.

It may not be generally known that ammoniated chalk may advantageously be substituted as a cleansing medium for the oft recommended but malodorous benzine.

What Children Should Eat.

It is one of the greatest errors to give too much meat to children under 10 years of age; their digestive organs are not equal to the demands made upon them by such heavy food. Even carefully compiled statistics it is proved that children who are fed largely upon a meat diet are irritable, snappish and quarrelsome.

The best foods for little ones are milk, custards, simple puddings, and generous fruit and vegetables. If there is need of a hearty meal a lightly boiled egg is an excellent article for a child. To growing children rich soup, broth and stews and occasionally a little bit of meat finely shredded, with plenty of vegetables.

The Bath Tub.

A great deal of comfort may be enjoyed by people who have ordinary bath tub facilities by a little attachment which gives one the privilege of a shower bath. This is a short rubber hose with a metal rose. It can be easily slipped onto the faucets. It is most bracing on an exhausting summer day to have a cold shower bath. The bath itself need not be cold; it can be adjusted to whatever temperature is comfortable. But the cold spray of the rose is exhilarating, and as you hold the tube in your hand and it is flexible you can direct the cooling shower as you will over the body. This has advantages over the stationery shower, once attached high up and well over the bath. Most of this shower went on the floor of the bathroom, over one's clothes or on the furniture and wall paper. Fortunately it is no longer the custom to place a long narrow, coffin-shaped tub in a dressing-room. The square, shot tubs are more comfortable. They should not be too high. Sometimes one longs for a stepladder by which to ascend the side and scale the bath. Rather low tubs, broad every way, hold all the water required, and as few of us expect to swim in the tub there is no reason why the bath to be long and narrow. It is exasperating to have the thousand dent or chip the interior of the tub by setting down hot pitchers here and there. When a housemaid has no separate spigot from which to fill the pitchers and kettles, a rubber mat should be at hand to be placed under the spigot and pitchers or vessels from touching the tub. Some baths have in the water, hot and cold, welling up from the bottom. This apparently is to circumvent the housemaid.

Care of the Piano.

A prim little lady who is not quite an old maid has the most delightful secret I know of, and this is the secret: Whenever she dusts the piano she never fails to spread a heavy bleached sheet over the keys and let it down around the edge and corner. This is essential if one wishes to keep the ivories white, and every particle of dust removed. When I daily from my lap the top of the piano as a sitting room; the sheet is not essential then, but the east parlor windows open out over the sidewalk, and when the dust spell comes on the sheet is again retained.

I have known of the most wooden of felt cover is a veritable dust strainer, and the fine dust that sifts through it would as well as dust-proof; hence the protection is plainly understood. The idea of a domestic who would dust the keys one by one with a rag was so gracefully pinned that it was more than potential that possibility. Doors to me that more fastidious girls might make these protective covers of pink or white cotton or flax linen, work corner figures or borders in coarse stitch, using white thread, or simply edge the edge with white cotton or brown linen fringe.

A Family Drink.

A basket of light grapes, allowing a pound for each person.

One-half cupful of sugar to each pound of grapes. One-half cupful of water to each cupful of grape juice.

Place the grapes upon the stove with only water enough to prevent burning; let simmer half an hour. Take off and extract all the juice. Return to the fire and add the sugar and the water. Let simmer ten minutes; take off and cool. Serve cracked ice in bottles or glass pitchers. For the children a liberal allowance of cracked ice may be added, as the grape juice is rather rich.

PERSONAL.—Any lady or gentleman wishing to correspond with the opposite sex for pleasure, companionship or matrimony, should write at once to us. We have a large list of persons wishing to correspond, to introduce you by mail. Many pleasant flirtations, warm friends and happy marriages are arranged through us. Everything strictly confidential. We refer to this paper. Address with stamp, Standard and mention, ship blanks. Personal Correspondence Club, Box 122, Chicago, Ill.

Horses That Count.

A Russian doctor has made a great deal of time finding out how much animals can count, and has found that horses can count more numbers than any other animal. He has found that a parrot can count four, a cat six, crows ten and some few dogs twenty. But he found horses that could count more than this. One would plow across a field twenty times and would then stop and rest, but it never stopped at nineteen or twenty-one. Always just twenty. Another horse always counted the miles along the road by the white mile posts that were set up, and stopped every twenty-five miles as it had been taught to do, to be fed. Another one was always fed when the town clock struck twelve. When the clock struck eleven it would lift up its head and listen, but when the bell had stopped would quietly drop its ears. But when the clock struck twelve it always neighed loudly for its dinner.

$100 Reward, $100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers, that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of Testimonials.

Address, F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.
Sold by all druggists, 75c.
Hall's Family Pills are the best.

Then and Now.

"Yes, they all prophesied a brilliant future for him. When he was only 5 years old he used to speak pieces at Sunday school entertainments and hold the audience spellbound."

"And now—"

"Oh, he married, and now he doesn't even speak to his wife!"

The Pirate's Daughter,

an exceedingly thrilling story by Commander Don Jenardo, will commence next week. It is laid in West India and is founded on historic facts relating to Robbins, the Buccaneer Sea King. Ledger readers will find it a great treat.

Bear Liked Sugar.

In a Vermont maple sugar camp, owned by a Mr. Forbes, the owner this spring often missed cakes of the maple sugar which had been set out in the snow to harden. For a long time the men at the camp watched for the thief, but never caught him, until at last one day they found bear tracks leading away from the camp, and followed them until they came to a cave in the hillside. Mr. Bear was not at home, but in one corner of the cave they found their cakes of maple sugar neatly piled up.

Mr. Bear had hidden away nearly 200 pounds of the sweet stuff, and when they went to carry it away they met him coming through the woods, walking straight up on his hind feet like a man and carrying more sugar in his arms. When he saw the men he did not wait to be cast, but dropped his sugar and ran away like any other thief.

Summer Outing.

The most famous and popular Summer Tourist resorts on the Continent are reached directly by the line of the Grand Trunk Railway System and its direct connections.

Valuable Train Service.

Copies of illustrated descriptive pamphlets of Lake, Mountain and Seashore resorts with full information as to rates, etc., will be sent on application to J. H. Burgis, City Passenger and Ticket Agent, 349 Clark Street, Corner Jackson Boulevard, Chicago.

Among Colonel Roosevelt's less-known hunting experiences was that of trampling upon a rattlesnake. Probably the colonel and his future Rough Rider and made a sick man of him for several days.

Boy's Secret Society—Membership Free.

Any boy can join the C. M. A. Free. It is the great order of secret society for boys under 15 years of age. It has grips, signs, passwords, badges, secret emblems, secret meetings, and everything that a secret society is chartered by law, and has nothing in it to interfere with your parents' or schools. Thousands of members everywhere. You can pick them out when you meet them on the street. Send your name and the names of several boys you think would like to join. Address C. M. A., Address Till 8748, 131 Nation Street, Oak Park, Ill.

Mere Matter of Choice.

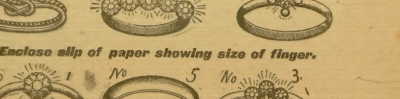
"If I ever marry it shall be to a woman of fine literary taste."

"Huh! Wouldn't you rather have a wife who thought you a good looker?"

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

Senator Vest is said to have the most marvelous memory in the senate and is able to quote from any speech or book extracts from any speech or which he has listened during a given session.

FINE RINGS FREE.



Enclose slip of paper showing size of finger.

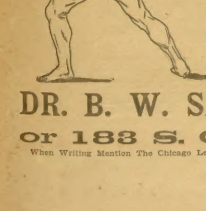
We give every reader of this paper the choice of any two rings shown in this advertisement absolutely free. Ring No. 1 represents a magnificent 18-karat, hand-engraved, hand-carved, hand-chased, hand-hammered, hand-everything Gents' ring, 22 carat in size. It is set in genuine Tiffany style, eight claws to hold stone. The ring is a beauty and has a genuine Diamond in it. Ring No. 2 is equally as handsome, and is a solid gold ring, hand-engraved and finish. They are fastened together by interlocking of the loops. Ring No. 3 has two "Alsace" diamonds and one genuine Diamond, and is a beautiful ring and a perfect fit. Ring No. 4 is a solid gold ring, hand-engraved and handsomely chased, and carved in roman gold style. Ring No. 5 is a solid gold ring, hand-engraved, the largest in the center as shown in the engraving, the whole setting is what is called Tiffany new cluster style. The ring is a perfect fit and is a beauty. Ring No. 6 is a solid gold ring, 18 karat, and is a perfect fit. It is a gypsy engagement ring. You see similar ones sold in jewelry stores for $5.00 upwards. Ring No. 6 is set with small "Alsace" diamond to resemble one of the finest and most valuable stones and is a beautiful ring and a perfect fit.

We give two of these rings absolutely free to our subscribers. All we require is that you send in 25 cents for a year's subscription to our paper, THE LEDGER, and we will send you the two rings you select, and each order is executed in regular rotation. We know that if we can get you to take the paper for a year you will continue for it is filled with the best and most fascinating literature, money, time and science. Lots more. It will contain during the year stories from the great Dickens, Scott and Thackeray, and humorous by the popular writer Robert Barr and juvenile stories by Ramy Jones. In addition it will contain the famous Ledger Puzzle Department, which is the best in the world. The Ledger Puzzle Department will be fully covered by the world's greatest authority. We will not be undersold by every house and therefore make the most liberal offers ever presented to the readers of any paper. Simply send us 25 cents for a year's subscription and state exactly the size of the finger you wish the ring to fit. At the end of your letter, we will enter your subscription for a year and send the rings postpaid. If you are already a subscriber send us the 25 cents and your subscription will be continued when the present subscription expires. Address

EDYCE'S MONTHLY, RING DEPARTMENT, EDYCE BLDG., CHICAGO.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MEN MADE STRONG--NO DRUGS



A child may inherit a parent's strength, it may inherit his weakness. There is food for sober thought expressed in that sentence. Strength is a natural condition, weakness the result. For thirty years I have been showing men the road to strength. I have demonstrated a natural remedy to be the true remedy. I have made a specialty of nervous and organic weaknesses in men as a result of excesses, or later excesses, such as Drains, Impotency, Lame Back, Varicocele, &c. I could not give you as good service as some doctors in fevers, or pneumonia, or smallpox. I am an authority on nervous debility, and of course I studied these subjects, but this is a day of specialties. I know the nervous and glandular system of men. That's my strong card. I treat weak men, and when I get through hearing of me say I use no drugs. When I take your money I want to give you value in return. I couldn't do that and give you drugs for weakness. They stimulate. They give "quick results," but you fall back into a worse condition. You are weak, you have robbed Nature by abusing her laws, but she is magnanimous, she is forgiving. I will ask her to give that strength back to you. I am the inventor of an appliance which puts in your hands a means of using Nature's great restorer, Electricity. It is the famous Dr. Sanden Electric Belt, with attachments for men. Mind what I say. In ten years from date this Belt will be the world's remedy for such. This is no boast. I received 5,000 testimonials last year. All absolute cures after all else had failed. The treatment is most common sense. It appeals to better judgement. It is the continued use of the pure galvanic current which does the work. Ordinary batteries are worthless. They do not generate the volume and cannot be applied long enough. That's what I invented my Electric Belt. It was to fill a want. You put it on when you go to bed, take it off next morning. That's what does the business. Seven hours of Nature's strengthener each day for ninety days with a little sound advice to suit your case. That is all. That will bring you back to strength.

FREE BOOK If in or near these cities, call, consult and examine free of charge, or if at a distance write for "Three Classes of Men," which explains all. Sent in plain sealed envelope. All correspondence given faithful attention.

DR. B. W. SANDEN, 826 Broadway, New York, N. Y.,
or 183 S. CLARK STREET, CHICAGO, ILL.

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"After I was induced to try CASCARETS, I will never be without them in the house. My liver was in a very bad shape, and my head ached and I had stomach trouble. Now, since taking Cascarets, I feel fine. My wife has also used them with beneficial results for sour stomach."
JOS. ESSELING, 1031 Congress St., St. Louis, Mo.

CANDY CATHARTIC
Cascarets
TRADE MARK REGISTERED
REGULATE THE LIVER

Pleasant. Palatable. Potent. Taste Good. Do Good. Never Sicken, Weaken, or Gripe. 10c, 25c, 50c.

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MARRIAGE paper with photos 3 months for 10c. Messenger, 3 Stoughton, Mass.

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C. S. A. MONEY Circulars FREE. Address J. E. Causey, Box 3, Waukegan, Ill.

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A SPLENDID PROFESSION taught you in 3 weeks. Makes you independent for life. Stamp stamp. DR. F. SHAW, Lawyer, Kansas City, Mo.

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POWERS' ASTHMA SPECIFIC
A sure and instant relief for ASTHMA and HAY FEVER. SAMPLES FREE. Address E. C. POWERS, 201 Fuller St., Boston, Mass

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THE HAIR TELLS ALL
IF SICK send a lock of your hair, name, age, sex and 4 cents in stamps, and I will diagnose your case FREE, and tell you what will cure your ailments. Address PROF. A. C. HUBERT, Box 4 Grand Rapids, Mich.

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A $25.00 Watch
in consequence of the work beautiful we have started. Double hunting case, nine solid gold plate, stem wind and set, fitted with one of the following celebrated movements: Elgin, Waltham, N. Y. Standard or Hampden, and warranted for

20 YEARS

Cut this out and send it to us, with your name and address and we will send the watch to you for examination, not to be paid for unless found perfectly satisfactory in every respect and worth the money. Regular price $25.00, but if in a hurry, may be sold to early customers at

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whether you want GENT'S OR LADIES' SIZE. Mention in your letter which you want. Address plainly as follows: Order No. 27 Send to E. C. CHALMERS & CO., 322-324 Dearborn St. Chicago.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

Animal Fights.

In the course of an article on this subject in the June number of Cassell's Magazine, Mr. H. Scherren, F.Z.S., gives some curious instances of fights between caged animals: Fights in sheer devilment sometimes take place between animals in confinement. A sharp, short battle took place in Edmonds' menagerie, between a lion and a tiger, just about forty years ago. The tiger was the same which had escaped from Jamrach's yard in what was then Ratcliff Highway, and bitten a boy. Mr. Edmonds bought it, and is said to have billed it as "the tiger that swallowed the child." Of course, the beast was a great draw, but, after a few days in its new quarters, the neck, in which his huge canine teeth made fearful wounds. Sutton, the keeper, now managed to drive him off, and used to say that, when the tiger loosed his hold the blood spouted from his victim's neck and splashed on the roof of the lofty den.

Very Likely.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Bronxborough, "that Johnny is getting into bad company. I heard him swear at his little sister just now."

"Perhaps," replied Mrs. Bronxborough, "he may have been listening to your remarks when you lost your collar button."—New York Journal.

ONE OF LIFE'S PAINFUL EPISODES.

tiger managed to draw forward the sliding door, and, squeeze itself into the adjoining den, where a lion was confined. The lion resented the intrusion, but was immediately seized by the throat, and, though there were tremendous struggles, the fight was practically over as soon as it commenced. The tiger never loosed its hold, and in a few minutes the lion was dead. About twenty years later a fatal fight took place in the lion-house of the Zoological Gardens, Regent's park, between a tiger and a lioness. The latter was ill-tempered, and, in sparring with her mate, drove her claw through his nostrils, and so began the fray. The tiger threw her down, and struck her several times with his paw, but without doing serious damage, then turning away as if to discontinue the fight. This the tigress would not suffer, for she sprang at his flank and fixed her teeth in his thigh. This was more than he could stand. One wild bound freed him; in a moment she was knocked over and he gripped her by the

No Supper.

The Sultan of Turkey is a very cruel ruler, who has so many enemies that he is afraid every minute of the day that some one will kill him for the many wrongs he has done. He is even afraid that his cooks will poison his food, and he has a man, who is called the Sultan's cupbearer, to taste of every dish that is set before him to show that it is not poisoned. You may be sure the cupbearer watches the kitchen very sharply.

Not long ago this cupbearer was called away, and did not come back until late the next day. The rules in the Sultan's court are very strict, and no one besides the cupbearer can taste of these dishes in the presence of the Sultan, so that timid monarch had to go to bed without his supper. Who would want to be the Sultan of Turkey?

The city of Peking has only one street lamp, and that is in the street where foreign ambassadors reside.

Tailor Made Suit $4.98

ALL WOOL MATERIAL

Jacket elegantly silk lined, skirt percaline lined, velvet bound. Made from Imported Fancy Cheviot Tweed Cloth; equal every way to others $10 suits. Your choice of Navy Blue, Black or Black Cheviot.

SEND NO MONEY but send us your address and we will send you this suit C.O.D. subject to examination, give both and if you find it perfectly satisfactory, and equal to any $10 suit you can buy anywhere, pay the express agent $4.98 and express charges and the suit is yours. Try it before you buy it. If you can buy a better suit anywhere, return it to us and we will send you your money at once, and we will pay the express agent $4.98 and express charges and the suit is yours. Try it before you buy it. If you can buy a better suit anywhere, return it to us and we will send you your money at once, and we will pay the express agent $4.98 and express charges. Try nothing if not satisfactory.

THE SUIT is made by expert tailors, in the latest style, with Italian Cutaway Sack, to fit long or short figures. All sizes. Fancy Cheviot Trousers, Alpaca Lined, Velvet Bound. Extra pair of Trousers for $1.50 extra. Write for our Big Free Bargain Catalogue of other suits, skirts, capes, etc., etc.

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OPIUM and Liquor Habit cured in 10 to 20 days. No pay till cured. Dr. J. L. Stephens, Dept. A, Lebanon, Ohio.

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PUZZLE
FIND THE PRINCESS.

The picture represents four men and a boy and a horse in the woods searching for the Princess. She is hidden in the town, but which one? Can you find her? Look sharp, for she is not easily found. The boy has a pet dog with him, and this dog is very fond of the Princess and you may discover her. If you do you get a handsome present. If you find her and send a correct answer you will receive, postpaid, a handsome present. If you find her and send a correct answer you will receive, postpaid, a handsome present. If you find her and send a correct answer you will receive, postpaid,